BSP: Peso to stay strong; exporters well advised to tap hedging tools vs forex risks

GMA certifies urgent bill to postpone barangay polls to May '09

Burma ignores int'l outrage; more arrested; military officer defects to Thailand

Dollywood: Testy Ms. Kapamilya out to irk Ms. Kapuso

Razon breaks silence, says too busy for ZTE deal

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Fil-Ams, Palace protest slur on RP docs in 'Desperate'

By Norma U. Portal
Correspondent

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

Erap cries foul over 'Pinoy Times' ad

By Jocelyn R. Uy

NBN deal probe in limbo

Tycoon said to be meddling in investigation

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Dona Pazzibugan and Christine O. Avendaño

THE SENATE PROBE OF THE $329-million contract for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project is in limbo amid allegations that Malacañang and a "powerful businessman" have allegedly "co-opted" the blue ribbon committee chaired by Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano.

$460-M Cyber Education deal not scrapped

By Michael Lim Ubac and Jerry E. Esplanada

FRIENDS OF ST. FRANCIS

Animal Day debate: Should Manila Zoo be shut down?

By Allison W. Lopez and Tina G. Santos

AS THE WORLD OBSERVES Animal Day today, a debate raged on whether the Manila Zoo should be shut down.

NBN jokes: Broadband, husband, etc.

By Tara Quimundo and Margaux Ortiz

SPECIAL REPORT

House may only touch 23% of P1.2-T nat'l budget

By Christian V. Esguerra

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

EZ2 FOUR DIGIT
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(no second number)
Hourly SUERTRES Rotating
4 4 9 — 1 1 7
MEGALOTTO 6/45
10 16 23 24 29 45
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Palace wants village polls reset

By Dona Pazolbugan and Christine O. Avendaño

GIVING IN TO THE CLAMOR OF HER ALLIES IN the House, President Macapagal-Arroyo has certified as "urgent" a bill postponing the Oct.29 barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections to August next year.

The Senate, however, ended its session last night without acting on the recommendation.

"The Senate's inattitude its position that it is best to proceed with the election," said Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he transmitted the President's certification to Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. and Speaker Jose de Venecia and urged the two chambers to consider the bill before they go on recess on Oct. 12.

Ermita told reporters that the Palace was supporting another bill which resets the barangay and SK elections to August 2008, to coincide with elections in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao.

"All I know is that there was growing representation coming from our allies in the Lower House...that's why the President gave way to that sentiment," Ermita said.

He said he had heard from congressmen that they wanted the postponement of the elections because it coincides too close after the last election, which had been expensive for the governors.

At any rate, the Commission on Elections said it was prepared to hold elections on Oct. 29.

"Our rule here is, if there is a law which tells us to postpone, we will postpone. If there is no law then we will implement and continue with the Barangay and SK elections on October 29," said Commission Bautu, who just took over as acting Comelec chair following Benjamin Abalos resignation earlier this week.

Bautu said Comelec is presently preparing for a command conference with the Philippine National Police (PNP) to ensure the holding of peaceful village elections.

The nationwide gun ban started last Sept. 29 and will run until Nov 15, unless designated by a law that postpones the village elections.

The Senate committee on constitutional amendments, revision of codes and laws, headed by Sen. Richard Gordon failed to present its report concerning a postponement of the elections, at least until May next year.

But Gordon's absence from the committee became an issue. He left Monday for Switzerland to attend the International Red Cross convention.

According to Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who is against the postponement, Senate rules require that Gordon personally defend his committee's report.

VIGIL FOR TRUTH
University of the Philippines law student Paolo Olarte lights a candle in front of the residence of former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri in Quezon City during a vigil Tuesday night calling on him to tell the truth regarding the aborted national broadband contract with the Chinese firm ZTE.

EXECUTIVE SESSION LEAK

Senate to summon Inquirer reporter

By Dona Z. Pazolbugan

THE SENATE ETHICS COMMITTEE IS SET to summon Inquirer reporter Julito Lubag Jumillana in its investigation on how the proceedings during the Senate's Sept. 26 executive session with former National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) director general Romulo Neri were leaked to the media.

Sen. Pilar Juliana "Pia" Cayetano, chair of the ethics committee, however, stressed that she respected the rights of journalists under the law to protect the identity of their sources.

She said she wanted to find ways to amicably settle Sen. Juliet Ferrer's complaint against the four unnamed sources cited by the Inquirer in its Sept. 30 report about what transpired during the closed-door session with Neri.

Citing sources, the Inquirer article earlier cited by Jumillana claimed Neri was on the verge of divulging the alleged bribe offer supposedly by President Macapagal-Arroyo on the allegedly anomalous ZTE-\$329 million ZTE Corp. national broadband deal when Arroyo intervened and allowed Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya to join the session as Neri's legal counsel.

Arroyo branded the Inquirer report as a "complete falsehood."

On Tuesday, he asked the Senate to investigate the breach in the strict confidentiality rule in closed, door executive sessions.

He also urged the Inquirer to name its sources.

"I am duty bound to look into the matter, its implications and to probe if there's a violation of our rules on confidentiality when we are in executive session," Cayetano said.

She said the four witness she would call would be Jumillana. But she indicated she was against compelling the Inquirer to reveal its sources.

"We all know that by law and under the journalistic professional code of ethics, [the identity of sources] is to be protected. Definitely we will be guided by our own rules and conduct in a way that's fair to all. We give the assurance to our executive session that their rights will be respected," she said.

Arroyo is determined to pursue his complaint even as he called for an end to the Senate inquiry into the NBN deal with ZTE since Malacañang has already cancelled the contract.

"I've lost interest in this because it's been overtaken by events, but my complaint will continue. There can be no honorable retreat in this," he vowed yesterday.

In a statement Tuesday night, the Inquirer said it stood by its story. It also said it would not be compelled to reveal its sources, citing its public Act 53.

"What I'm asking the Inquirer is, can you waive the protection (for journalists) against being compelled to name sources," Arroyo said yesterday.

Arroyo said there must be some form of immunity against those forced to have violated the secrecy rule in executive sessions.

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP), however, said that Arroyo's move smacks of intimidation and suppression of freedom of the press.

In a statement yesterday, NUJP chair Joe Torres said the government's attempt to penalize journalists is "a cornerstone of press freedom."

Torres said the NUJP supports the Inquirer's decision not to reveal the identities of its sources. *With a report from Alexis Pagsu*

Davao twins separated

By Jocelin Badilla
Inquirer Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—SEVEN DAY old conjoined twins were successfully separated by a team of doctors at the Davao Medical Center (DMC) on Tuesday morning after almost four hours of operation.

Myla and Mylar Penile, born at the Sasa City Hospital in Tawang, Bajada Boulevard by caesarean section, were joined at the lower abdomen and shared a portion of their intestines. They also have an imperforate anus, or having no anal opening.

Dr. Michael Mandolyong, chief of the Department of Pediatrics, said the twins were separated at the Davao Medical Center on Sept. 28.

"The next day we had a stable case and decided that the twins be operated on at the soonest possible time because there were signs of them getting weak," Mandolyong told reporters.

JDV: I'm watching my back

By Norman Bordadora

DE VENECIA

HOUSE SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA yesterday said he continues to enjoy the support of the majority coalition in the wake of a pending ethics complaint and reports that some members of the majority are planning his ouster less than two months before the House goes on recess.

"I have been wondering my back since I became Speaker in 1992.... There have been attempts every year. Still, I get reelected," De Venecia said.

"We have a very strong alliance with all the major political parties. I have a great confidence in the solidarity of our alliance based on mutual respect and the need to enact reform legislation in this 14th Congress," he said.

Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte, president of the Kampi party, has denied that he and his allies in the so-called reform bloc in the majority coalition are cooking up something that would end De Venecia's being reelected.

In a privilege speech last week, Villafuerte denied that he was planning De Venecia's ouster after the Speaker's son, businessman Jose de Venecia, accused the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo, Jose Miguel Arroyo, of selling him in back-off from the national broadband network (NBN) project in favor of the Chinese-based ZTE Corp.

And if he were to initiate an ouster move against De Venecia, it would be as a result of the ethics case that lawyer Raul Pulido filed against the Speaker, Villafuerte said.

Yesterday, a Villafuerte ally, Quezon Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III, said there were no discussions of a supposed plan to oust De Venecia, in a dinner that the latter's bloc had held on Tuesday.

"Many people are asking about the dinner last night. It was a regular dinner that we hold every two weeks," Tañada said.

"We just discussed on how to proceed regarding [with the] budget. The budget process has been taken up. But on the ouster, there was no such thing," he said.

Villafuerte said the younger De Venecia's accusation against the President's husband was not a good enough basis to initiate the Speaker's ouster.

He said De Venecia should instead take seriously the ethics case against him as it might provide a solid basis for his ouster.

Surigao Sur Rep. Edcel Lagman said that De Venecia's failure to garner support from the House committee on ethics when it was headed by Villafuerte's ally Quezon Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III, and

GMA urged to appoint permanent CHEd chair

By Jerry E. Esplanada

AMID THE CONFUSION IN HIGHER Education (HE) is undergoing a "leadership crisis," a group of top CHEd officials has asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to appoint a permanent chair.

In a two-page letter, CHEd officials said a permanent chair would "sustain the sound accountancy and academic leadership" in the tertiary education system and prevent a "hollow in the delivery of vital public services."

Some agency insiders, meanwhile, called for the immediate replacement of CHEd chair Romulo Neri who was earlier appointed to the post in a temporary capacity.

The commission made a "full-fledged" search for Neri.

Neri has been "tied up lately not with CHEd matters but with the (national broadband network) controversy," noted the same CHed sources.

Not staying long

Neri, a Cabinet undersecretary planning secretary, took over the CHed post Dec. 19, 2006, to look Dr. Ethel Pate-Ibe to the latter's alleged failure to aggressively implement the Individual Graduation program, among others.

Neri has reportedly said he wanted to finish his job as CHED within six months and insisted he has "no ambition of staying here longer."

"We are aware that Chairman Romulo Neri's stay at CHED is temporary. Hence, we appeal to him (to) allow to put special attention to the appointment of officials in the commission in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act number 7722, otherwise known as the Higher Education Act of 1994," CHed officials told Malacañang.

The letter was signed by deputy executive director Julito Vitriolo, directors Jess Tayag, Amelita Ragodon, Bonna Dalmacio, Carmen Domingo, Emilina Suaga, Diana Rita Dela Jean, Ester Cuenca, Isabel Idilayo, Gabriela Maldaan, Evelyn Pascua, Freddie Bernal, Evelyn Mojica, William Medalan, Lanie Valencia and Regina Pontes.

Troubleshooter

Neri has marching orders from the President to "troubleshoot" the commission from August this year to February 2008.

But Neri is in a "difficult situation," said the CHEd staff, citing his involvement in NBN controversy.

In their July 2 letter, the CHEd officials claimed the agency's leadership crisis was aggravated by the "unbridled ambition" of some officials whom they also accuse of sowing "confusion, distrust and discontent among fellow officials and staff."

The same officials, however, did not name names.

But CHEd insiders said the officials were apparently referring to Neri and Commissioner Diana Rosalen.

The CHEd Employees Association (CEA) has urged the President not to appoint Rosalen as Neri's replacement, saying she was not qualified and deserving of the position.

'Misled, deceived'

If true Rosalen who drew the ire/ire on the alleged irregularities surrounding the P900-million soft-costs laboratory project of CHEd.

Rosalen claimed she was "misled and deceived" by the CHEd Bids and Awards committee, headed by Vitriolo, when approving the project, also known as the Integrated Multiple Business Processing — Outsourcing Architecture Contract Center or IMBPO-ICC.

Rosalen also accused Vitriolo of "pressuring CHEd people to sign documents asking for my resignation because I do not favor, as he claimed, the unruled credentials."

"His motives are questionable because he is the acting chair of the BAC that awarded the IMBPO-ICC contract which I'm questioning," she said.

Vitriolo has denied Rosalen's allegations, saying the project was "above board."

Dutch court keeps Joma out of jail

THE HAGUE—A DUTCH COURT ON Wednesday rejected a prosecution appeal against the release of Philippine communist leader Jose Maria Sison, accused of being involved in murders in the Philippines.

The ruling means that Sison will remain free during the Dutch police investigation into his alleged involvement in the murders of several political associates in the Philippines.

The appeals court said "the prosecution file lacks enough concrete clues that Sison can be directly linked to the assassinations which it needed to prosecute him as a perpetrator."

The ruling upheld a lower court order in September to set Sison free.

The appeals court decision does not preclude Sison from being prosecuted on murder charges. The court only rules on the request to keep someone in custody, while it is the public prosecutor's office that decides on whether or not to press charges.

Sison, the founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines and its military wing, the New People's Army, had been living in the Netherlands since 1987. He was arrested on Aug. 28 in the Dutch town of Utrecht where he lives.

Also suspected of going online from the Netherlands, to murder his former political associates in the Philippines, Romulo Kintanar and Victor Dalisay.

According to Dutch prosecutors, Sison, 68, ordered the assassination of former NPA leader Kintanar, who was killed on Jan. 23, 2003. The murder was claimed by the NPA itself in an official publication, they said.

Prosecutors are also investigating his role in the murder of Dalisay and his son-in-law Stephen Ong on Sept. 26, 2006. Dalisay was a member of the highest command of the NPA and his assassination was also claimed by that group. AFP

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marie france

House may only touch 23% of P1.2-T national budget

product of two weeks of marathon sessions by the appropriations committee and its subcommittees.

In determining the best menus of the 2008 budget, Lagman said the lawmakers should "revisit and revise our inept and injudicious policies on debt service and seek innovative means of liberating our people from the debt trap."

But they can do so only by rejecting the law on automatic appropriations for debt service and "evasion of the legislature its unfettered concurrence/ supervisory over the purse," he said, adding:

2 'billies'

"We can express the strong sense of Congress that the payment of tainted and worthless loans through appropriate special provisions in the general appropriations bill."

Lagman cited two key loans, the payment of which had weighed heavily on the annual budget appropriation.

He said the "useless and facedly grossly procured loan" that covered the construction of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant was an "exorbitantly expensive folly."

According to Lagman, the government has paid since 1986 a total of P64.7 billion—P43.5 billion for the principal amortization and P21.2 billion in interest—for the power plant. The loan has been fully paid.

"All for absolutely nothing beneficial to the Filipino people," he said, pointing out that the total payments for the power plant was bigger than the combined appropriations for 2008 for the Departments of Health (P16.3 billion, including the budget for four government hospitals), Agriculture (P23.8 billion), and Transportation and Communication (P22.3 billion).

Lagman said another "folly" was the loan granted by Bank Austria worth P500.5 million for the purchase of "substandard" medical scanners exclusively for 26 government hospitals.

He said that since then, the equipment had been banned under the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999, the interest payments for the loan in 2008 was pegged at P15.7 million, and for the principal amortization, P76.3 million.

"The government continues to pay this useless and toxic loan through automatic appropriations," he said.

36 centavos daily

In a privilege speech delivered on Tuesday night, Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said public health was among the low priorities of the aquayo administration.

Each Filipino is getting from the government a measly 36 centavos daily for his health needs, the party-list lawmaker said.

The congressman was based on the current health budget of P11.56 billion, which supposedly represented only 1.5 percent of the total national expenditure program. The amount had significantly dwindled from P18.7 billion 18 years ago.

Ocampo said the existing 36-centavo-daily health budget—or only P131.9 annually—would not exactly improve to next year's proposed budget of P11.227 billion.

He said if the projected health budget for 2008 was P13.7 billion, representing the amount allocated for the DOH.

"While the allocation for health has been shrinking, the budget allocations for debt servicing and the military has been continuously getting the lion's share of the national budget," Ocampo said.

He said the military budget had increased by 11 percent since 2001, and that last year alone, the allocation stood at P82.1 billion.

P28.1B if...

The proposed health budget for 2008 will actually rise to P28.1 billion, But that's if the budgets of four government hospitals and that of the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. would be added to the DOH budget proposal of P13.7 billion, according to Dr. Gene Nisperos, secretary general of the Health Alliance for Democracy.

The group, a network of doctors, nurses and other health professionals, helped Ocampo analyze the national expenditure program on the perspective of health allocation.

Ocampo said that while the P28.1 billion total health budget represented a significant increase, the additional amount would be "insufficient to address the worsening health" or "increasing number of doctors and nurses."

He said much of the amount, or P12.56 billion, would go to salary adjustments, and a similar amount to "family health, including family planning."

Another P1.3 billion to capital outlay will supposedly be spent on the "health facilities enhancement program."

But Ocampo said the program would likely be "accessible to those with the capacity to pay, rather than the poorest Filipinos."

'Doctors to the Barrios'

Ocampo also questioned the difference in the amounts allocated for the "Health Information Systems and Technology Development" (an additional P125 million) and the "Doctors to the Barrios and Rural Health Provider Program" (a mere increase of P6 million).

"Doctors to the Barrios" is a program intended to stem the tide of doctors and other health professionals leaving the Philippines for better-paying jobs abroad. Its supposed to provide incentives to doctors who will spend a significant period working in far-flung areas.

According to Ocampo, the program has been covering on a P62.5 million budget.

Other baby cuts

The lawmaker also drew his colleagues' attention to baby cuts in other key item budgets.

In the proposed 2008 budget, subsidy for indigent patients was cut from P1A million to P38 million.

At least 12 government hospitals also slated to lose P122 million—from P2.7 billion this year to P2.579 billion next year. Among them are the Dr. Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center, East Avenue Medical Center, Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital and San Lazaro Hospital.

Mga atraso ni Erap kay bilis naman nating makalimot...

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, October 4, 2007
26th Week in Ordinary Time
Francis of Assisi

1st Reading: Neh 2:1-8, 2:6, 7:12.
Gospel: Luke 10:1-12

The Lord appointed seventy-two other disciples and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place, where he himself was to go. And he said to them, "The harvest is rich, but the workers are few. So you must ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers to his harvest. Courage! I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Do not without purse or bag or sandals, and do not stop to the greetings of those you know.

"Whatever house you enter, first bless them saying, 'Peace to this house.' If a friend of peace lives there, your peace will rest upon that person. But if not, the blessing will return to you. Stay in that house eating and drinking at their table, for the worker deserves to be paid. Do not move from house to house.

"When they welcome you in any town, do what they offer you. Heal the sick who are there and say to them: 'The kingdom of God has drawn near to you.'

"But in any town where you are not welcome, go to the marketplace and proclaim: 'Even the dust of your town that clings to us here, we wipe off and leave with you. But know and be sure that the kingdom of God has drawn near.' I tell you that on that day it will be better for Sodom than for that town."

Commentary:

Jesus reads the scroll of the law and all the people stand and listen attentively! This is the liturgy of the word with the book held high for all to see. The people are blessed and they promise to obey the Lord. The law is interpreted, and when the long reading is finished the people are asked to worship the Lord in holy awe the Lord, and when they do not, all are included and led.

The disciples are sent out to preach the Word of hope, the good news of God to the people in pain. They are to proclaim not only with words, but with the way they dress, travel, where they stay, and the poise that they bring forth with them. They are not to shop around for a better place to stay but stay where they have been welcomed—where the people have listened to and responded to the Word of the Lord. If the Word is refused then they move here. The Word must be preached and people must have the chance to take it to heart or to ignore it. Do we desire the Word as these people do?

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Fil-Ams, Palace protest …

From page A1

health care professionals all over the world," Consul General Mary Jo A. Bernardo-Aragon said in the letter to ABC TV Network president Mark Pedowitz.

In Manila, Malacañang yesterday said the remarks were inconsistent to a social skit and asked producers of the show to refrain from Filipino-bashing performances by putting them down.

"Filipino health professionals are highly regarded all over the world," as proven by the high demand for them in many countries, including the United States, Arroyo said.

"We believe that 'Desperate Housewives,' and not more so making such prejudicial statements in order to appease homos," she said.

Many enraged Filipino-Americans have resorted to online petitions and posted blog entries demanding an apology from Bernbaum and the show. They described Pinchot's remarks as "disrespectful," "discriminating" and "hurtful."

DP does not desperate

Philippine Health Secretary Francisco Duque III is also asking the producers for an apology for the sexual comments and worry about the country's "enhanced picture."

"I want to let them know that Filipino doctors are not desperate," Duque told the business in an interview.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Filipino nurses' performance had shown how well-trained their fine performance, as he recalled the recent recognition given to Lily Ann Sarmiento of the top 10 nurses in the United States.

Reached for comment in Manila, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney yesterday said "we all have great respect for Philippine health care and Philippine health care workers throughout the world are known for their dedication and compassion. (They) are much sought after."

But Kenney admitted that she only watched Philippine TV shows and not US shows. "You get much more information than I do … I haven't heard the story."

For decades, the Philippines has been one of the main sources of foreign-trained health and nurses in the United States—a trend that is expected to continue as a severe shortage of nurses and other health workers grips the US health care system.

"The United States recognizes the academic standards of Philippine medical and nursing schools and, in general, does not require additional schooling in this country for Filipino health care professionals who wish to work here," Arroyo said.

The Philippines is considered a top "medical tourism" destination for foreigners, including US citizens, who choose to undergo surgical and other medical procedures in the country because of its "high-quality and reasonably priced medical services," she added.

The controversial scene on "Desperate Housewives" featured Bruce, who visited the office of Dr. Edith Sheffer (played by Swoosie Kurtz). Sheffer feared that Mayer might be experiencing signs of menopause and recommended that she take a blood test to be sure.

Mayer agreed to take the test—but only after demanding to check Sheffer's credentials and making sure "they are not from some med mail-order school in the Philippines."

The widely watched episode opened the popular show's fourth season. The show is written and produced by Marc Cherry, who was also behind the hit show "The Golden Girls" (ABC, 1985-1992).

Under fire, again

This is not the first time that "Desperate Housewives" has come under fire for perceived racism.

A New York Times article, published when the first season premiered in October 2004, said "Television executives have gladly reverted to the sexism and racism that brought the lowest prime-time ratings in the networks … The backlash is most obvious on 'Desperate Housewives' and 'Boston Legal,' ABC's standout new dramatic comedies."

The author, Alessandra Stanley, also said "Desperate Housewives" was entertaining, "but it wants the clock back to pre-Betty Friedan America, lampooning four bored, frustrated, white upper-middle-class ladies who lunch." Betty Friedan was a well-known advocate of women's rights and author of the "Feminine Mystique," the feminist bible to the United States.

Blog entries on the perceived racist slurs are not limited to Filipino-raters. On ABC News' message boards, one blog entry said:

"I have just received an e-mail petition being circulated among the Filipino community. Subject of the petition is an alleged racial slur that was mentioned in the 9/30 episode of 'Desperate Housewives.... Tea Hatcher seeking to explain that the diploma of the medical doctor examining her was not from the Philippines. Was that funny to you?"

The Philippine Medical Association (PMA), for its part, is not to raise the issue to the US Federal Communications Commission and the World Medical Association to ask for a retribution of what is considered "demeaning" comments.

Dr. Fe Gozon, PMA spokesperson, said in an interview that the group met yesterday and decided on top of a complaint to the television network which aired the show and its producers to bring the matter to the government regulators.

"The comments were totally outrageous. We are sending a complaint … to ask that the issue be rectified because it is demeaning to the character and dignity of Filipino doctors," said Gozon.

The USFCC, which was established by the Communications Act of 1934, is an independent government agency charged with regulating interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite and cable.

Better than US docs

"I don't really know (where this is coming from). Maybe they are having because my doctors are better than them. Filipino doctors have good bedside manners and good support. They empathize well with their patients and are very competent," said Burgos.

He said a number of Filipino doctors had, rather, become professors in Ivy League medical schools in the United States. This, he said, pointed to the competence and the ability of Filipino doctors to manage diseases since they have trained in three top US schools and several of their teams. —With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Beverly T. Sarte-Ishal and Alexis Romo in Manila

Controversial NBN deal dead but gov't still has option

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By Gloria C. Dumlao, Rina T. Dichoso and Christian V. Esguerra

THE CONTROVERSIAL NATIONAL BROADband Network (NBN) deal with China's ZTE Corp. is dead, but the government can still choose to pursue the project under a different tack, Acting Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Augusto Santos said yesterday.

Commission on Elections Secretary Leandro Mendoza also expressed the hope that "after the dust has settled down, the project would push (through) in a manner more advantageous and acceptable to the Filipino people because it is good for efficient governance."

His office has not decided on how to go about this.

Santos said government could pursue other options on how to put up its own broadband network, such as through a build-operate-transfer (BOT) scheme with a new private sector proponent or by tapping the services of local telecommunications companies.

Asked whether the National Economic and Development Authority had any study that could refute the claim of UP economists that the NBN project was not

IMPORTANT

To the Devotees of the SACRED HEART OF JESUS. Tomorrow, October 05, 2007 is the FIRST FRIDAY of the month. NOVENAS to the SACRED HEART OF JESUS and to ST. ANTHONY are given every FREE. Please get them from JASMINE at the Sacristan/e de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City, or at Rudilees Center Bldg. 170 Salcedo St. Legaspi Village Makati City, MM.

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NBN jokes: Broadband ...

Front page A1

project with China's ZTE Corp.

The hearings have become the nation's No. 1 "teleserye"—a "crime," as one stockbroker described the nationally televised shows, enlivened by the antics of "clowns."

Said one text message that hit cyberspace in lament in the probe grew: "Watch the NBN hearings: broadcast scoundrels, with Mike Arroyo as director, Benjie Abalos as host, Letlet Mendoza as lead guitar, Gary Ross on keyboards, Sam Pierson on sound mixer and the one and only Gloria (of Hello Garci fame) on lead vocals, called the Broadband, playing Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Chinatown mall, Sundays at 1:00. Free of charge, subsidized by the Chinese government."

Not a few infamous mall attractions that was temporarily shut down last year for selling dirt cheap smuggled goods from China.

Uncomfortable situation

"When Filipinos are placed in an uncomfortable situation, one of their reactions is to resort to laugh it off," Wetzel said. "It's the kind of people who don't like confrontations and spreading out jokes and ting tunes is a way for us to cope with serious situations," Ramores says.

For example, Ramulo Bert's revelation "Sec, may 200 ka sila" during the Sept. 26 hearing on the $329-million NBN deal has found its way into substances of some songs.

Its opening phrase can be interpreted as an exclamation of astonishment, as in: "Sir you have 200?" or "Sir, have 200 here."

The latter translation was reportedly answered by Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos (who), erstwhile director general of the National Economic and Development Authority Ombdi, during a recent golf round at the fairways of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club.

Neri, who has been repeatedly mentioned in local the Commission on Higher Education, presumed it was a bribe offer to the tune of P200 million as the Senate would endorse the ZTE deal that will digitally win the nation's bureaucracy down to the evasive barangay.

Not 'Bagong Daan' but '200 Daan'

Neri's testimony also produced this text message: "News flash! A new group has emerged to topple Bagong Daan (New Way) of (videographer) Bro. Eli and Bagong Buhay of INC (Iglesia ni Cristo). The new group is called Dalawang Daan (Two Ways)."

We kin from the President's husband has been dragged into the controversy exposed by Dr. Ben Ong, namesake son of the Senate Speaker and proponent of an "unsolicited bid" for a build-operate-transfer (BOT) broadband deal.

The BOT scheme—at no cost to the government other than taxes' free—was aimed in favor of a "well" concessionaire from Benq China for 25 years at 5 percent annual interest after a five-year grace.

The deal was said to have been hammered out over rounds of golf in the courses in China and Wack Wack. The Chinese reportedly gave Abalos fabulous commissions and Chinese gifts to bedrooms during his golfing sorties in China.

Abalos, who has exposed as Gonzalez chair, denies all the charges and has announced he is filing libel charges against Senk News and the young Dr. Ong who whose initial exposé immediately touched off a media frenzy.

As the scandal unraveled, reluctant witnesses showed up before the Senate inquiries. Some were quite accommodating. Secretary Leandro Mendoza made a somewhat distant rumor appearance and his assistant secretary Lorenzo Sarmiento put in a personal appearance at performance level. As did the number Finance Secretary Margarita Teves.

Pinoy way

"If we can lighten it up, we can make the problem easier to bear ... This is our way of lampooning our politicians ... It's a way of using our artistic quality," Ramores says.

The swift circulation of the ZTE jokes, so much the same fashion as the "Hello Garci" page, reflects the public's general sentiment put lightly, Ramores says.

"When you bear it, it's funny and the reason why people forward it is because they want to share the people behind the scandal. It's to say the government is in crisis. If you really do not see much, you won't benefit it," she says.

"It's a way of blaming no one. It might be a sexist way, but it's the Pinoy way," Ramores says. Otherwise, if it were just a reporter on a whim it would do a quick double.

Mobile service group TEXPower launched the All-ZTE-FG promo ring tone it had called from YouTube, the widely visited Google website.

TEXPower revamped cell phones with text jokes at the height of calls on Mr. Abalos to resign after the "Hello Garci" wiretapping controversy broke out in June 2005. The wiretaps, purportedly between Mr. Arroyo and former election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, was evidence Mr. Arroyo stole the 2004 Presidential election, according to the opposition. The President denies this.

Collective anger

TEXPower president Anthony Ian Cruz has urged Filipinos to download, use, repeat and forward the ring tone "as a sign of our collective anger over the latest scandal to hit the Arroyo administration and denounced that the investigation result in the prosecution of bribers, bribe takers, fixers and influence peddlers."

Political science professor Ariadna Montiano says he likes most a text message he received last week while Mr. Arroyo was attending the UN General Assembly in New York last week.

It was a parody of a fictional conversation between Mrs. Arroyo and her executive secretary Eduardo Ermita. "Ginte (G), presidente pa ba ako? Ermita: Pipilitin namin, ma'am."

Translation: Ed, am I still the president? Ermita: We will try and keep it that way.

Professor Montiano says Filipinos like to talk and laughter a scandal or political tragedy.

'You are not alone'

Montiano recalls the 1983 assassination of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino on his return from three years of self-exile in the United States to rally the opposition against the dictator Ferdinand Marcos. The military said Aquino was killed by communist assassin Rolando Galman, who himself was gunned down by military escorts.

Montiano says that the most quoted joke then was: "Ninoy, hindi ka nag-iisa; Galman, natinahindi ka; Ninoy, nag-iisa ka na."

Translation: Ninoy, you are not alone; Galman, you have been use upped; Ninoy, you are now alone.

There were no cell phones then. The message found its way in placards and sometimes prominent carried during demonstrations in the ensuing days of the Marcos rule.

During the troubled days of President Joseph "Erap" Estrada, an entire text brigade helped bring about Edsa II in 2001 that ousted the popular movie actor turned politician.

Wristband, broadband, husband

Montiano still figures in the NBN text jokes: "ang nagpalagyan kay Erap—wristband; kay Abalos—broadband; at kay Glo-ria, husband."

Translation: What brought down Erap was his wristband; Abalos, broadband; and Gloria, husband.

Montiano, by way of consoling ourselves, especially when the people we perceive are the villains or the antiheroes are much too powerful for us. The powerful are the antihero in the jokes," Montiano says.

"With respect to NBN, all these text messages reflect the frustration of the people," he says.

Montiano refers to the claim in June that the NBN contracts were either immediately after they were signed in April in China. This came to light, perhaps fortuitously, only in a forum at the former Professional Schools two months later.

Essence of democracy

"The essence of democracy is the need to explain ... straightforward questions need straightforward answers," Professor Montiano says.

He concedes that some of those depressing text messages have been outlawed by Solon struggling to bring down Mr. Arroyo.

"There is a legitimate source of frustrations and dissatisfaction of the people, and those who cannot wait to bring his down are using this opportunity," Montiano says.

Where are those text messages leading to, given the apparent street protest fatigue and the opposition's failure to ignite another John uprising following the "Hello Garci" scandal. After having a laugh, what next?

"It is difficult to say" says Montiano.

Downside to tragicomedy

That's where Ramores finds a downside to the current tragicomedy.

"We probably take too much time laughing. Where are stop laughing, what do we do? If laughter takes care of the embarrassment, after that, we should sit down and think of what we should do about it, not just keep on laughing and make the embarrassment permanent. We also have to deal with it," she says.

FDNR'S TRUMPET CALL FOR REFORMS

The time for action is now. The call for heroism and commitment is today. We must seize the moment for national reforms. Not to respond makes us conspirators in the slow death of 80% hungry and poor Filipinos. Apathy will turn us into a failed state very soon.

The NBN deal has crashed. It does not matter if Abalos has resigned or Neri has become a stalled man due to his non-cooperation and silence. We all know the stench of this deal and many other onerous deals emanate from Malacanang. The diarrhea of issues on corruption, treason, immorality and illegitimacy,etc. all point to the First Couple and their cohorts. To insist on evidence beyond reasonable doubt is garbage and belabors the point.

Efforts have been done to lift us out of the stinking quagmire. We acknowledge the sacrifice and leadership of Gen. Roy Miranda, Gen. Danny Lim, Senator/Capt. Antonio Trillanes III and their confrères in detention. But we must not rest until final victory is achieved. Our national redemption lies in our collective will to triumph over our present miseries and reverse our acquiescence to evil and crime in governance.

FDNR NOW BLARES ITS TRUMPET BORNS FOR GENUINE CHANGE!

All Filipino civilians and military who want transformation for peace and prosperity in our country in our immediate future is part of the **Filipino Democratic Nationalist Reform Movement Nationalist** because the reforms we undertake must be pro-Filipino and pro- Philippines. **Democratic** because we uphold the bill of rights, the principles of justice, freedom, democracy, sovereignty and peace. **Filipino** because we Filipinos abroad including our brothers abroad who still love their country and other Filipinos alike must undertake the reforms we need. We therefore ask all FDNR members and supporters/sympathizers to start wearing or using the FDNR stickers, posters, tshirts, etc. today.

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Animal Day debate: Should Manila Zoo be shut down?

From page A1

"It's really sad," said Mona Coronel, board secretary of the Animal Welfare Coalition, of the Manila Zoo's current state. "That elephant, I think is already going crazy" referring to Mali, pressing about in his small pen since the quiz.

"If you watch, that elephant for 10 minutes, you'd see that it's doing the same thing over and over again," she said.

But while Pete wants the animals to go back to their environment, Coronel and her group of 15 nongovernment animal welfare groups disagreed because the zoo animals would not stand a chance in the wild.

"We do not agree with that because the animals cannot endure themselves anymore... Where will you put them, in a sanctuary? PAGE (Print) spent for it? If you do a campaign, you provide a solution," she said.

The foreign case of dolphin "Kelly," who was released from a zoo and died four months after, showed that captive animals had lost their ability to hunt for their own food, Coronel added.

Better care needed

In general, Coronel said zoo animals should just receive better care, and proper space—comparable lacking in the U.S. American zoos along Adelaide and Mabini Streets in Malate.

"We're not for zoos, but Manila Zoo, because it's already existing, they should rehabilitate the animals and improve their condition and confinement," she said.

Instead, much work has to be done inside the zoo despite recent physical facelifts.

Known for "sweetness," Dr. Ronald Mendiola, chief of the Manila Zoo's zoology and division, claimed none of the animals had it and if they did, they addressed it immediately with "behavioral programs."

After this senator-driver we made for the monkeys. We would put food inside it, and they would have to think of how to get it," Mendiola said.

In an earlier interview, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim said he would add more animals to the zoo's 92 species from Cotton Island in Palawan.

Gradual phaseout

Coronel vehemently opposed Lim's plan.

"Keep them in Cuyo, they're doing fine there. If you want to add more animals, then should not make the zoo bigger," she said, adding that would require any moves to import animals not endemic to the Philippines.

Coronel said her group was for a "gradual phaseout" of the Manila Zoo and other such facilities—meaning wait for the current animals to pass away rather than replacing them.

Various media releases on wildlife, she added, should make up for the zoo's loss.

Endangered species

"I think that's good enough because we have to keep them in the wild. I think it's a privilege for us to see one," she said. "We don't want our next zoos to open, so let's just keep what we already have and improve their conditions."

The Animal Welfare Coalition, which supports people who take care of rescued animals, said protection could be given to species dwindling in numbers.

"What we need is more plants to cultivate [different endangered species, more sanctuaries. It's the government's role but the private sector can also help them with that. It's their job to protect our animals," Coronel said.

Another animal rights group, Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), agrees, saying the Manila Zoo should "take educational value and "more and even 1 percent of what these animals' natural habitats are."

"While it may be argued that what is in our hands is the wild' anymore because we have lost a lot of our forests, jungles, etc. still, the Wildlife Rescue is also continuing Pete against shifting for the hasty closure of the Manila Zoo or any other zoo in Metro Manila.

Alternative facility

PAWS Director Theresa Mundita Lim said the zoo or any zoo could not be shut down without looking for an alternative facility for the animals and assessing their behavior, condition and fitness to go back to the wild.

"You can't just shut down a zoo if you don't know where to place them. That has been the practice in other countries. You have to find out where they should go," Lim said in an interview.

After years in captivity, animals may no longer know how to capture prey, and may end up dying in enclosures, she said.

"Some of the animals in Manila Zoo have been there for so many years. They can't survive in the wild. There has to be behavioral assessment to see if they can still survive in the wild," Lim said. —With reports from Ed Barcelo and Sonny Carvajal

SHE LOVES her dogs so much that internationally acclaimed orchestra conductor Heinz Quack had them fly all the way from their home in Australia to be with her here. Sagine-born Chinese-Australian Quack, who is well known to Filipino music lovers, his home in the Philippines for more than a month this year and this year's for a series of outreach concerts in the province to raise funds for the Manila Symphony Orchestra as well as to give lectures. An animal rights advocate and avid wardrobe, Quack, a classical violinist, appears the bread entertaining of pets and has rigorously challenged it to Animal Planet's Quack's Chaos with Black, Zorro and Tobar finding it home to chase outside Manila where she stays in relax and help in learning what she is not to the problem. "Jesse and St. Francis loved animals," she told the Inquirer. (DR.DOC)

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Paying back

"There is also an effort to rehabilitate animals for eventual release to the wild. Or, if this is not possible, sanctuaries also to let the animals come to live in peace with their "head" so to speak, so that, at least, we humans attempt to "pay back" what we took away from them when we built our cities, homes and recreational their living areas (forests, etc.)," Cabrera explained.

However, public Pete, PAWS doesn't actively campaign for the closure of existing zoos as it cited its limited personnel and financial resources.

"We choose to focus on what we think are more pressing animal welfare issues like stopping dog fights, the dog meat trade, advocating proper disaster responsible pet ownership, and final treatment of animals in general and attempting to change for the better people's perceptions about native dogs," Cabrera said.

The head of the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB) Director Theresa Mundita Lim said the zoo or any zoo could not be shut down without looking for an alternative facility for the animals and assessing their behavior, condition and fitness to go back to the wild.

"You can't just shut down a zoo if you don't know where to place them. That has been the practice in other countries. You have to find out where they should go," Lim said in an interview.

After years in captivity, animals may no longer know how to capture prey, and may end up dying in enclosures, she said.

"Some of the animals in Manila Zoo have been there for so many years. They can't survive in the wild. There has to be behavioral assessment to see if they can still survive in the wild," Lim said. —With reports from Ed Barcelo and Sonny Carvajal

MANILA STUDENTS REIGN SUPREME IN THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

DELA CRUZ, CHAMPION IN THE PHARMACOLOGY TAKES AN TELLING JUDGE

Dina Lyn Mizette V. dela Cruz, a fourth year student of the Manila Science High School (MSHS), Division of City Schools (DCS), Manila, established the National Champion of the Fourth Parliamentary Tagalog Session in Pharmacology in the Philippine 2007 contest sponsored by the Department of Education and the Bureau of Secondary Education.

Dela Cruz prevailed over the finalists during the six regions of the country and was awarded Php15,000, a trophy, a medal, and a certificate of Excellence. Ex Agricultural Protocol High School, Davao, Batangas, August 30, 2007.

The Competition consisted of three categories quiz on Philippine Literature and Literature, extemporaneous speaking, and essay writing, aimed to test the versatility and capacity of the students in Pilipino.

Dela Cruz was trained by Mrs. Blessed Sison, a Master of Science Science High School from the division to the national level of the contest.

MORE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL WINNERS

Patricia Byron S. Bueno and Anna Mc Cara won first place in the Math Tour Competition of the 2007 Metrobank MTAP-DepED Math Challenge national level held at Metrobank Plaza Auditorium, Makati City last April 2007. Their coach was Mrs. Zenaida G. Ortiz of Manila Science High School.

Likewise, Patricia Byron Bueno was awarded the gold medal in the 3rd International Young Mathematicians Competition (IYMC) held in Gwangju, South Korea from 09-December 6, 2006.He was awarded the Certificate of Recognition by the Department of Science and Technology, January 29, 2007.

These awarded students of Manila Science High School with Mrs. Isabel Infante as its principal, bring home the fact that the Division of City Schools, Manila, will keep on aiming at and working for quality education and hastening the potentials of the students to the fullest.

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OPINION

Battle for Burma

EDITORIAL

THE IMAGE IS PREPOSTEROUSLY DISTURBING: THE picture, published in many newspapers, shows a dead Burmese monk, floating face down in a smoky river. His saffron robe has turned pale; it has turned the color of human flesh, drained of blood. Hints of saffron can still be glimpsed, partly hidden by the body of the slain protester. The close-up photograph suggests that the rivers of Burma (Myanmar) have been turned into makeshift graveyards, full of other bodies.

The democratic struggle in Burma has taken a terrible turn for the worse. As though it had traversed a perverse Mobius strip of history, however, the country finds itself back to where it was two decades ago. A democratic resurgence stopped, with massive loss of life.

According to a Burmese military intelligence agent who quit the service out of what he said was a deep revulsion, thousands of monks have already been murdered by the military dictatorship.

That total dwarfs the 10 deaths reluctantly acknowledged by the Burmese junta, or the 200 claimed by dissident groups based abroad. Whatever the total (and we must recognize the possibility that the former agent could be exaggerating his estimate because his connection to reality is tenuous), this much is clear: The iron fist of the military dictatorship has come down hard on the protesting monks, and the street demonstrations have come to an end.

This too is clear: The military junta has raided monasteries across the country, barging in in the dead of night, beating dozens of monks and dragging thousands of them away.

In other words, and as delicately phrased by the country's foreign minister before the General Assembly of the United Nations, "normalcy" has been restored in Burma.

If that is the case, then it is time for the world community to reverse the tide of normalization.

The events since the election of 1988, which Aung San Suu Kyi and her pro-democracy party won overwhelmingly, prove beyond a doubt that the military generals in Burma are beyond the reach of international public opinion. Certainly, on some issues, they have heeded international outrage, even at the cost of loss of face. To cite just one instance, they declined the rotating chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, in favor of the Philippines, the next in line, because of intra-Asean concerns about their human rights record.

On issues that pertain to the exercise of power within Burma, however, they have been stubborn and stupidly so.

Just the same, international pressure must be brought to bear on the junta. Despite the generals' best efforts, Burma is not completely isolated. International support still will filter into the country, and encourage freedom-loving citizens.

Asean must rather up the diplomatic pressure on Burma, to hold the generals to account for mass murder and the continued detention of Suu Kyi. The option to expel Burma from Asean must no longer be considered merely possible, but necessary and unavoided.

Nor can China allow the other countries that sustain the Burmese economy most overt pressure on the generals. The threat of a possible boycott of next year's Beijing Olympics might force China to reconsider its studied neutrality on the Burma issue. How many more monks must die before China will realize that our only is Burma a threat to regional security, but the generals themselves are a threat to the Burmese people and China's great-power pretensions?

Dying tongues

FOREIGN COMMENT

PRAWN 7,000 INNOCENT LANGUAGES ARE LEFT IN THE world (no scholars estimate that one dies out every *couple of weeks*). At that rate, only the words of the major tongues would be left before we know it.

And that's a sadness. Language is what gives depth, warmth and color to life—and to the culture left behind when we die. However subtle the differences in dialects, however great the differences in language, lots of our losses the world that much blander. We wish the defenders of dying tongues well with their difficult task.

The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, New Mexico)

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Standing on one's head

VIEWPOINT

Jaime L. Mercado

TO SEE THE BEAUTY STAND ON YOUR HEAD, Ghiyeri Kelbi (however pggkuuuu) says.

That's my sound counsel for this country where crooks are wedged into top positions and citizens are pawns. And as interior decorator Rolando Pena demonstrated, politicians wear rotation can shock jail within.

Ghiyeri's other favorite is the first president to be convicted for plunder, Joseph Estrada was raised by Pinoy, who dangled a Malacañang pardon. Estrada didn't even disturbed sun-upstairs with his lawyers' going to a Manansalan still, awaiting reinstatement or a Supreme Court appeal. But Pinoy decided: "Chinoman exhibitions in the Sunakan are always enjoyable."

Pinoy's Christmas Days are exclusive. Merchants are the ones in cahoots and pardon, and when does the bully pulpit of the presidency sanction having gold chains, tax evaders, official serving of conditions for liberty? "Shall I wear out my belly grooming in the dust?" Cipriano de Bergerac asked. "No, thank you."

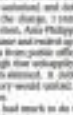
"No, thank you," Estrada told the Palace, instead, he asked the Sandiganbayan to reconsider six counts. Dap Sandiganbayan, the Estrada's, he's spotless and doesn't need absolution. Is that good one? Obviously, it's sound theology. Even God cannot pardon if there isn't a frame of remorse.

There's no contrition about what the verdict declarations. In November 1999, jinky Julio Delbocro deposited $189 million into the Jose Velarde accounts. That was the 34 percent commission for P1.8-billion worth of Belle Corp. stocks purchased by the government. Then, when the Government Service Insurance System or Social Security Office and Estrada were one and the same person, the court found, Velde from Velarde's account paid for the Boracay mansion, etc.

In counsel, Pena cavies jurisdiction issues, by former President Alberto Pujayori, the Fujimori Peruvian Potato incest. Susan Roces joined for sure Presidents Cesar Zoo Imman and Soh Tan-soo. "We rule the secret of other nations if we throw away the undeserved seat to grant our end either."

Insufferable

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

SOMEONE SENT ME A TEXT MESSAGE RECENTLY that was meant to be a joke. Looking at the figures showing last week's Social Weather Survey why we call our public officials "former rich."

What can I say? "Dahon" were also how the nonmembers of Ateneo called their schoolmates, and that was the last thing I was thinking. Needs to also how we call the Pacific Ocean, and that is the last thing it is. "Intelligence" is also how we call military infotechnists, and that is the last thing it possesses. "Honorable" in reference to our public officials belongs in the category

But I can sympathize with my text sender's dismay. Truly, we wonder what has happened to honor in this country. Other countries have problems with corruption, too, other countries have problems with corruption of corruption, too, but people not are the same levels of shamelessness. They say honor, more than any other people on earth, are especially sensitive, given to saving face, and consider losing shamed or disgraced the ultimate misfortune. Imagine in some cultures for someone to take his own life. Well, not Filipinos. Not today anyway.

By itself, the number thrown by Benjamin Abalos, who thought nothing of being accused by the former Comelec chairman Gaudencio Antonino, who, along with his boss, Gloi, thought nothing of the bribe, the Three Stooges—Ang Pogue Bayan, Alfredo Delmendo-Bulatlat and Adam Ang-ay—who thought nothing of the pre-vending shop large enough to make Henry Sy realize that he underrated in "term" important big shame-manner" (the beginning bell), is enough to make you cringe. It's important to how things are in other Asian countries Cagayan was eternally by a string of resignations, one issue by its prime minister, over corruption scandals, and it wasn't too long ago that Thailand's own prime minister resigned also over a corruption scandal, his enough to make you say "Lamian" when you are in a bowl of noodles.

It wasn't always so. I still remember how it was before martial law when public officials would labels as being called or disposed in editorial cartoons as *buayas* or crocodiles (a less vindictive decade we consider when we were in the middle of the Marcos dictatorship and we defended ourselves angrily from the charge, I remember) that our dispatcher then, Asia Philippines Leader, once was signed lunar and received apology a couple of libel suits from public officials, but nothing near either to sigh that orthography our public officials are more attuned. A judicious hour in light of how history would unfold. Unhappily, today they are not.

Material loss, of course, had much to do with shattering the culture of shamelessness among public officials. But the current regime has brought it to a stunning culmination. The current sadness and drawn conversation from the head of state itself. Somehow that in Asia do not have to be ashamed of being rich, even in the public sense, but political plums, that has been heard by everyone pleading with a Lutsker commissioner to win by one million votes over her opposite rival, that is married to someone named Arroyo, that has been her country the most corrupt in Asia, according to a well-known international organization, that is widely believed to have been the ultimate beneficiary of the ZTE deal, that has the known name of any Filipino president or any Asian head of state, except the members of the Burmese junta and maybe the ex-wives, has who is still there. Indeed, who is not just still there but looks somehow more so bearing in the circa 10 years.

There is a handful more like that, the entire state will follow.

If there's something to be pleased from this, it

is simple that at the end of the day, what stops, or ought, civil caution really are not laws or congressional investigations—almost—official shenanigans. What stops, or ought, corruption is the capacity of public officials to be shamed or, where that fails, the capacity of the people to make life hell for them.

Many years ago, Thailand and other countries that held honor as predominant, *Time* wrote as then, quite, are outside for the first. Recently, I heard a Japanese analyst lamenting on CNN how low-country was being engaged by the economic boom, and how Japan's public officials were driving home to shame lengths. It is an affliction desirable to be carried by us. If they were only to complain to Taiwan, we should say call our officials to Tokyo embodiment.

The more than the capacity of public officials to be shamed, there is the capacity of the public to shame them, or failing that, make them social pariahs or lepers. What drives many Japanese and Korean officials to suicide is not just a sense that they have failed themselves and their loved ones but that when they're found out, they become the butt of jokes. It is also the certainty that their crimes have made their children objects of much of their contemporaries, and nothing but dark lives will spare them ridicule and humiliation all their lives.

But there's the very big rub. What happens when you have a situation when public officials are no longer shamed by publicly being shown to be liars and thieves, and the public is no longer shamed by what it has done? Or, which is what is happening to us today? The one thing that was missing from the Senate hearing that was then during Iraqi's impeachment trial was public uproar, a universal sense of revulsion that regulators and reapersons itself to be narrators and watchful vigils. The question is not just: What is God's name has happened to our public officials? The question is: What is God's name has happened to us?

The question is not to just—Why do we call our public officials "honorable"? The question is: Why do we call ourselves sufferable?

E-mail: [illegible]

Barangay, SK elections should be postponed

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Herlinda Oliveros-Constantino

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, reluctant as it seem, have pleaded with the Commission on Elections to postpone the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) elections because the Commission on Elections is not ready to conduct them now. The congressmen also urged that postponing the elections would enable the Comelec to deal with the ARMM elections in 2000 so as not to be gone with too billions of pesos, and enable the poll body to concentrate on voting and counting.

The House stand is supported by the Comelec itself, which admitted it was not ready, albeit till, a big part of the burden of preparations and expenses would fall. But the biggest argument for postponement is the sudden reason for this to be: Comelec officials don't want to be caught in the middle with the ARMM elections in 2000 would coincide with the

'Amparo' can't stop violations

LETTERS

SO MUCH NOISE IS BEING MADE ABOUT MALACAÑANG'S "WRIT OF AMPARO." The website http://www.gov.ph/w—marchiv/ NEGATIVE NEGATIVE/media11.pdf tells us how devised a rule which it would in processing human rights violations by the government of Illinois. In fact, human rights violations by Illinois police authorities are just as rampant as—if not more rampant than—the human rights violations in the Philippines.

The question, therefore, is that if the so-called Writ of Amparo is the product of all sorts, why is Illinois's record of human rights violations worse than ours?

Many Mexicans risk their lives annually, across the highly guarded US-Mexico border into the United States just to get away from the harsh realities in their own country.

I seriously doubt if the proclamation of the Writ of Amparo into the Philippines would be a better reform measure than the extension of the EO even pistol ban and road jury systems which I have suggested for adoption in the Philippines.

Hopefully, the Writ of Amparo would be good only if its issued upon the request of a powerful politician against a poor victim of human rights violations and a "president sal" lawyer (e.g., owned Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan) or against a foreign powered governor of the president like Gloria Macapagal Arroyo would intervene to prevent the issuance of the writ against his or her pets, do you think a regional trial court judge would be brave enough to issue a Writ of Amparo? Most likely he would have second thoughts because of the corporation's deeper cut "resources."

I still strongly believe that the best way to promote human rights violations is to establish a penal unit system to enforce in ry members, one recently investigate and order human rights violations and a total jury system to try the accused.

"What we need in the struggle between "the power of the public" and "the power of the republic" is a "check and balance fulcrum." "We can do this by adopting the presidency and total jury systems.

—HORACIO "BOY" CASTILLO III
hcastillo3@yahoo.com

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions please the attention of name and phone by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Blumentritt Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to 896-8793, 897-4700, or e-mail vaderreader@inquirer.com.ph

All sorts of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

The President should 'back off' on Burma

IT HAS FLABBERGASTED TO WATCH Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo reminding the military junta of Burma (Myanmar) of the way it is treating political prisoners. She even called for the release of all of Burma's political prisoners. But now, Lon's a sheriff in charge? —Nothing talking? Its core ISSA his forgotten when she did so a number of critics of her administration—some of them have been put behind bars, others have been killed, and so think the country is not under martial law.

GMA even called on the United Nations to intervene. But wait, hadn't somebody from the US named Philip Alston come to the Philippines to investigate extrajudicial killings in the country and didn't he conclude that the Philippine military is behind most of these killings? BIRA didn't listen to him. In fact, her justice secretary even derisively referred to Alston as a "marbacle."

President Arroyo should "back off." The situation in Burma is so messed up, it's not right for her to make a joke out of it at this time. She should remove him the big log that's in her eyes before attempting to take away the speck in other people's eyes.

President Arroyo should back off. She does not have the moral stature to interfere in Burma. Let her rules but no one else the first priority.

The President should back off and let those who have true and genuine hearts for the victims of suppression, human rights violations, militarization and the like do the condemning of Burma's military rulers. Let her listen to the cries of the mothers who have lost their sons and daughters, of the children who lost their parents, of the siblings who lost their brothers and sisters.

The President should back off. Let those people who are standing on the high moral ground help the people of Burma gain their freedom. The President should instead embrace as forceful the call she has made to Burma's military junta.

—EDGAR G. TERRELL G. Cavite
jlgtt@gmail.com

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Unacceptable behavior

THE LIS CONFECTION FITS TO DEFINE, or ignore, news that the BAAP board has banned from the game venue Jack Foster, "who usually comes to throw with league commissioner Ed Cordero" (Business, 9/28/07), for two years.

I would like to put on record that during the second round of the Siniloan University of San Jose Tournament, several amateur basketball referees and a BAAP official and league commissioner Ed Cordero (himself challenged him on a few fights inside the coliseum while the game was still ongoing. We were treated a few steps behind the BAAP technical committee table. During that game, the Siniloan Red Lions and Basketball Batteries Organizational referees spent better their defensive calls and non-calls, to the point that Rico Palou stood up, banged the table of Cordero and challenged him to dispute in our favorites, no, including David, was drawing at the referees to straighten up. (No evidence of the dubious calls, please refer to the photo on the Sports page of the Sept. 28 Inquirer issue, showing Rico Palou, clearly with both his feet off the floor.) Thousands of fans saw the unending arbitration but not one of the three referees committed.

Shame, I believe, also included Cordero in his passionate verbal tirade, in essence asking him to do something about the ugly incident. It was at this point that a BAAP official, an assistant of Cordero, stood up, turned around us, and challenged David to a fist fight. Cordero soon followed suit and also challenged David to a fist fight. Both of the tall cordo, did not respond to their challenge.

Without justifying David's verbal offense, I and the other viewers find David's unacceptable behavior than a BAAP official, much less a commissioner himself, would challenge a fan to a fight. In this game you are what you do in front of the fans, no matter the verbal abuse. There is no justification for this. If David is to be sanctioned, so should Cordero and other other BAAP official.

Rather continue to make shoddy and dubious calls and non-calls that seem to control the point spread of the games—with seeming impunity. It is the impression of more than one, despite what managers they have underwriters, Cordero, the BAAP Technical Committee and the BAAP board are powerless to do anything about the officiating.

To the BAAP board: do not bow angry and frustrated fans. Do something about Rebisco questionable officiating, which is the root of the anger and frustration. If the BAAP cannot do anything about it, it might as well just cancel the remaining games. Iron all the fans, spare us the charades and just let the Rebisco referees decide the outcome of the basketball games.

Make "Heaven through Anew" including officiating a reality.

—RAMON F. FUTENO, Ignacio St., Tel., rgguevara@yahoo.com

Relative justice

IF A STUDY WERE TAKEN OF THE PUBLIC opinion on the plea to pardon Joseph Estrada, the convicted plunderer, please count me as among those who strongly oppose any kind of pardon for the corrupt former administration as planning to start beginning.

If the plea pardon through, it will loudly proclaim that in this country there are different standards of justice. Justice for the poor and rich; it is cursed means prison, while justice for the rich is what the accused wants freedom. Truly, Juan dela Cruz is continuously being screwed "every which way" since the death of President Ramon Magsaysay.

—ROGUE B. BUSOS, rosabusos11@yahoo.com

No need to spill the beans

CONFESSION OF MOMMY EDUCATION. Chiz Escudero does no longer needs to spill the beans. He seems to have decided to submit to his President Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband are sitting on top of the NBN scandal. What a shame and disgrace not only for me and her family, but also for the government and the entire nation. They should be made to suffer the consequences.

Former Gen Ret is an intelligent, honest, deeply religious person even up till this day. He must be losing sleepless nights. He is regret and remorse are to make.

—JESUS ABAYA, jabaya@hotmail.com

Across the NATION

'Ineng' keeps dumping rains on RP

TYPHOON "INENG" gathered strength yesterday as it moved away from the country but continued to bring heavy rains and flooding to many areas.

In Central Luzon, monsoon rain brought landslides and forced the opening of dam outlets to prevent disaster.

Landslides destroyed eight homes along the Angat River in Barangay Lumang Bayan in Pandi at noon Tuesday, but no one was reported hurt, disaster officials said.

Teresa Gomez, Pandi municipal social welfare and development officer, said the rains also had weak conduct the soil along the river embankment and caused the houses to collapse on Tuesday.

She said the local government is conducting relief operations for the displaced residents.

In Bulacan, workers increased on Monday the body of a farmer who was buried in a landslide at Sitio Upper Pinanaan in Barangay Cruz-na-Daan in Hagonoy town.

The body of Henry Legdigan, 36, was recovered with the help of less 8-9 dogs, soldiers from the army's 79th Infantry Battalion and policemen from Hagonoy and Bulacan towns, both in Bulacan.

Overflowing dam

In Bataan, rising rains prompted Mayor Enrico Garcia to slightly open four spillway gates of the Maria Cristina Chromite Dam, Mayor Dale Inciong, information officer, said the dam reservoir reached the 192-meter water level on Oct. 2, a slight reduction from its 192.37-meter high elevation on Oct. 2. The dam's spillway is 192 meters.

The mayor of Balanga, Bataan, on Wednesday sought the assistance of the national government to help them repair of a 15-million seawall which was destroyed by huge waves whipped by a storm surge on Monday night.

Balanga Mayor Manuel Francia stressed the importance of the immediate repair of the 60-meter seawall in Barangay Malaya which, he said, serves as the only protective fence for the coastal village from destructive waves.

In an interview, Francia said he would send a letter to the Secretary of National Defense (DND) asking for help.

He said since more typhoons were expected to hit the country in the next few months, it was apparent that the repair should be done at once.

He said at least 150 families abandoned their houses as the seawater inundated the village.

He said waves at heights and distances nearly also destroyed the flooding.

Quezon village officials, from data said the waves were as high as eight meters and reached several dozens areas located 40 meters from the shoreline.

Check and assess assistance of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) yesterday continued their search for 14 missing passengers of a cargo vessel that sank off Polillo in "Ineng" approached the country and another typhoon, "Hanna," left.

Lt. (N) Armand Balilo, PCG spokesperson, said continuing rains were blocking the rescue efforts.

"But rest assured that our search and rescue operations will not cease until we find the missing persons," Balilo said in an interview.

Balilo said MV Nilo, owned by CPH Shipping Lines, sank around 4 p.m. last Sept. 29 some 28 nautical miles south west off Cuyo, Palawan.

The cargo vessel was loaded with 800 metric tons of cement from Cebu and was on its way to Brunei's point in Palawan when it sank due to bad weather.

Aside from the cargo vessel, the Coast Guard is also searching for a yacht after Bureau national Typhoon Kong requested for help.

The yacht, named Kingston, left Hong Kong last Sept. 20 and was on its way to Cebu with three Filipino crewmen, Balilo said.

He added that the Coast Guard Action Center has been coordinating with the yacht's owner, Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon, and Gilbert Mendoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon, Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon, and Margaux Ortiz in Manila

RESIDENTS of Barangay Wawa, Bocaue, Carlito guides bamboo poles washed ashore by huge waves. Several houses were destroyed in the village. Waves as tall as 8 feet also destroyed several villages in San Luis, Batangas. Scores officials said the waves could have been caused by a storm surge brought by Typhoon Ineng crossing each other's paths.

Secret talks in KL won't break deadlock with MILF

COTABATO CITY—GOVERNMENT and Moro rebel negotiators failed to come to terms on the issue of ancestral domains and refuse to meet again during an unannounced meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Both sides also failed to agree on the final date of the supposed 11th formal talks which have been suspended for more than a year now.

Mohagher Iqbal, Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) chief negotiator, said the meeting was in a form of questions and answer aimed at coming to a "meeting of the minds."

"Sadly, we failed at the meeting issue because we are more fleeing," Iqbal said in a phone interview.

No date

Members of the government and MILF peace panels held a special meeting in Kuala Lumpur last week to discuss the possible resumption of the formal talks, but got tangled instead on ancestral domain.

It was the second meeting in three months, all aimed at reviving confidence on the 10-year-old peace process.

Iqbal said there was no date set for the next meeting.

Jun Mamarinta, MILF secretariat, said the government was again offering the expanded autonomy scheme despite President Macapagal-Arroyo's earlier pronouncement that the government recognizes the Bangsamoro's right to self-determination.

MILF rejection

"The MILF rejected it before, it will to the same same proposal with the new formula," he said.

While the two panels automatically tried to agree on the date of the next formal peace talks, they agreed that confidence has been restored.

Also present in the exercise meeting were chief government negotiator retired general Hermogenes Esperon and chief negotiator Silvestre Afable who is now acting as senior adviser.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said the guerrillas appreciate the continuing effort of the Malaysian government, the facilitator in designated facilitator of the peace talks, Datuk Othman Bin Abdul Razak, to broker a peace deal between the government and the MILF.

Third party

Iqbal talks between the government and the MILF started Jan. 7, 1997, but gained momentum only in 2003 with the help of Malaysia as "third party mediator."

The Malaysian-led International Monitoring Team, composed of police and military officers from Malaysia, Brunei, Libya and a rehabilitation expert from Japan, has also been helping oversee the ceasefire since 2003.

Edwin O. Fernandez and Jeffrey Mallen, Inquirer Mindanao

Naga City water reserve drying up; crisis seen by group's study

NAGA CITY—THE CITY'S groundwater reserve is being depleted and a water shortage is looming, according to a study.

The study prepared by the Cary Philippines, World Wildlife Foundation and International Institute for Environment and Development, and the city's consultancy exercise a looming 6,000 cubic meters of water per day.

It warned of a water shortage in 2010 since the rate of consumption was expected to reach 113,320 cu. m. per day.

The groundwater in Naga City's primary and major source for domestic, industrial and commercial activities. With its growing population and booming economy, data on static water level indicated that the city is experiencing a decline in groundwater level," the study said.

Meanwhile Lt. Nayve, banning city coordinator of Gov Philippines, said the Metro Naga Water District (MWD) cannot tap the water of the river to put simply building pump wells.

The MWD serves the city and its three neighboring towns.

Nayve said building pump wells are not the solution if the groundwater reserve was already depleted.

The study said Naga City could get replenish its groundwater reserve since it is located downstream of the Bicol Watershed.

The Bicol Watershed supplies 61 percent of Naga City water needs, Nayve said. The watershed has three tributaries—Pantihanan and Carolina in Naga City and Palestina in Pili town.

Barangay study steps into the soil of these villages, adding to the groundwater reserve from December to...

Inquirer Southern Luzon

Loss of 4 Seals a big one for Navy execs

ZAMBOANGA CITY—"IT will take an one year to produce Seals," said Commander Renato David, head of the Special Warfare Group (SWAG) battalion of the Philippine Navy.

David was referring to the death Sunday night of four Navy Seals in a clash with suspected pirates on Langkit island off Basilan.

He said it would be hard to find replacements for those who died, "If you lose one, four, it's a big loss," he said.

Members of the Naval Special Operations Unit 4 or Navy SWAG Seals (Sea, Air, Land warriors) trained to hand and accept that they would suffer casualties despite the precise planning they had made for the raid on Tuesday night.

Rear Admiral Emilio Marayag, Naval Forces Western Mindanao Combined Chief, said all those who participated in the raid were "well-equipped with night devices such as night vision goggles."

He said they first thought that 11 Old Jay Sapalan, who was one of the four Navy Seals killed in the clash, was hit in the arm, "but we later discovered that he suffered a bullet wound in the left side of the upper trunk."

Superiair's wife Coly said her husband had told her that

MOURNERS of the Navy Seals view the bodies of their comrades killed in a clash with pirates.

he would be home on Christmas of Sampaloc, Manila; Ernesto Second Quarter Master Second Class of Kidlat, Aklan; and Fireman First Michael Alexis of Puerto Princesa.

Wounded were Lt. Roderick Capistrano and Seaman Second Engine Man Armando Labadico.

Despite suffering wounded, Marayag said they still considered the operation launched by the Navy Seals and the Special Operations Platoons of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 7 (MNLT7), successful.

He said they were able to "neutralize" the target—Abdulrajak Sadikul, a known pirate and alleged executioner who operated in the islands of Tabuan and Langkit near Hadji Mohamad Ajul town in Basilan.

Town mayor Salih Desudul had told Marayag that 10 pirates were killed in the encounter that started at around 11 p.m. Monday and ended six hours later.

Marayag said his men died in a "fair fight." *John S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

Panlilio vetoes ordinance on quarry control

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio on Wednesday vetoed an ordinance regulating the province's multi-million peso sand industry.

In a letter to Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao and members of the provincial board, Panlilio said the new law was "contrary to public interest."

Bacolor Mayor Nonoy Dungo, vice president of the Pampanga Mayors League, which proposed the law, said he expected the provincial board to override the action of Panlilio.

Dungo said the board had already approved it by a vote of 10-0 on Sept. 25.

Guiao said the board had held public hearings on the measure and the governor's interests in the law when the latter's office had not attended the first public hearing and sent only a letter to raise questions in the second hearing.

"It is his prerogative to veto but we will take appropriate actions once we get to know his decision," Guiao said, adding the board would tackle the governor's position in a meeting.

In his letter to the board dated Oct. 1, Panlilio said the sixth ranee was enacted "without the mandatory public hearings."

He attached the position papers of civil society groups opposed to the ordinance.

Panlilio said the ordinance also violated the provisions of the Local Government Code, especially the collection of administrative fee, which the ordinance abolished. The amounts or P100 per truckload of sand.

The ordinance, he said, also violated the principle on the separation of the executive and legislative functions, mainly the taxing and determination of the fair market value of sand as well as the fixing of rate on fees and charges.

He opposed the provision allowing the representative of the provincial federation of quarry associations to collect payments and issue official receipts, saying that task cannot be given to a private person but only to the provincial treasurer under the guidance of the governor.

The ordinance "practically removes the power and authority of the governor to prosecute and implement the law regarding quarry as it sought to transfer the power to issue permits indirectly to the mayors, making the permits issued and granted by the governor useless," he said.

Panlilio, he said, are issued exclusively by the governor for 5 hectares and below and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau for 5 hectares and more.

"I did not approve the ordinance because the public is deprived by the legislation," he said.

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

MT. ISAROG Guardians on site visit. The volunteer group protects the mountain from illegal loggers, treasure hunters, poachers and slash-and-burn farmers.

Village stewards protect Mt. Isarog

By Jean Escander Jr.
Chronicle Central Bicol Star

THOUGH NO LONGER OFFICIALLY DEPUTIZED AS FOREST guards, members of a community-based group have been braving the odds and danger in checking illegal activities at Bicol's highest peak, the Mt. Isarog National Park, in Camarines Sur.

The Mt. Isarog Guardians (MIG), numbering 146 and coming from 25 villages surrounding Bicol's highest peak, are wielding only the power of donor's arrest in protecting the mountain's forest and natural resources.

Teresito C. Gonzales, MIG team leader, says the members have relied on guts and intuition in launching operations against illegal loggers, treasure hunters, wildlife poachers and slash-and-burn farmers encroaching on the protected area.

Isarog, a 1,966-meter inactive volcano with a 1,000-meter deep crater, is endowed with 140 bird species and 2,000 plant subgroups, of which 1,300 are still unidentified, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau.

The so-called "Vulcan de Agua," Isarog has 16 major rivers that provide potable water to 15 of the 20 towns of Camarines Sur and irrigate some 67,000 hectares of rice lands at its foot.

It is not known for any mineral deposits, except for sulfur in Hinacligan, Goa, Camarines Sur.

Twenty-three villages surround its slopes, home to 5,275 families or 29,019 persons belonging to the Tolungnon and Ciriaton Agta tribes, Bicolanos, Visayans and Bicolanos. But some 1,500 people live inside the national park, a PAWB baseline survey in May-June 1999 revealed.

Originally organized under a conservation program of Care Philippines in early 2000, the MIG has been patrolling the park for the past four years. It has sustained the participation of communities in forest resource protection.

Gonzales says the move by the DENR to suspend the issuance of deputation cedes to the MIG.

For two years now, the group has been stripped of authority to apprehend persons conducting illegal activities inside the park but, he said, the City Environment Office of Naga advised them to assist their duty of citizen's arrest under the law to continue only safeguard the protected resources.

Deputation

Reynaldo Aran, acting regional director of the DENR, confirms the suspension of the MIG's deputation and that the environment secretary had removed the authority from the regional director to deputize forest guards.

Aran explains that for effective new working for the restoration of the deputation of volunteers and pledged not to file new that the MIG members are to regain their authority to help enforce environmental laws.

The MIG works as a team and maintains close links with members in all villages in Isarog, in coordination with local officials.

MIG volunteers have undergone various seminar on law enforcement and ecology training since 2002. They have been trained by governments and nongovernment agencies, including the Caceres Social Action Center Foundation Inc. (Cassfi), Care Philippines, and the National Integrated Protected Areas Program (Nipap).

Awareness

Projectors M. Barbosa, village chief of Sinaban, says the intervention of the Cassfi through the Mt. Isarog Area Development Program (MIADP) has increased environmental awareness among the villagers.

Robert Ty, program coordinator, says the effort is the response of the Archdiocese of Caceres to the growing threat of complex issues on the overall environmental state of the Mt. Isarog National Park.

Aside from mobilizing the MIGs for forest protection, the program employs strategies that address some of the ecumenical, health, economic, advocacy and organizational needs of the communities, he says.

"Before, the people in the community just simply ignored and saved less about illegal activities in the protected area. Now that many orientation seminars have already been conducted here, people now find to report illegal activities in the forest," Ty says in the vernacular.

He estimates that 30 percent of the 400-ha village of Gainhan is within the 10,111-ha protected area of the national park.

The village chief acknowledges the initiatives of the MIG in dramatically reducing park encroachment and other illegal activities.

Samson G. Eder Jr., another MIG patrolling the village of Hamamanis in Naga, says the group has received threats many times but its members have kept their faith and courage to pursue their roles as stewards of Isarog.

Sulberto Peria, a MIG of Gainhan, says his group usually asks MIGs in adjoining villages for help in a show of force against encroachers. With diplomacy and encouraging words, he says, the poachers, loggers and treasure hunters peacefully abandon their plans.

When the National Integrated Protected Areas Systems (Nipas) Act of 1995 was enforced, Isarog was included among the eight priority areas in the country listed for the establishment of protected areas.

The Nipas sought the legal establishment of protected areas all over the archipelago.

The PAWB considers Isarog to be the only remaining intact forest in Bicol for volcanic-life-ecosystem because it is fragmented and isolated.

About 4.9 percent of the protected area has been built up for agricultural and residential purposes.

Isarog was first classified as timberland with an area of 13,421 ha under Proclamation No. 517 dated March 28, 1928.

On Aug. 17, 1933, the national government issued Proclamation 480 that established the Mt. Isarog Forest Reserve. Presidential 913 declared on July 20, 1998 its 10,112 ha of land as the Mt. Isarog National Park.

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MT. ISAROG National Park in Camarines Sur.

NBN deal probe in limbo; tycoon meddling?

From page A1

ere gave out a break."

Madrigal said she received information that "the blue ribbon committee agreed to suspend indefinitely the conduct of the hearings upon the request of a powerful businessman and through the intervention of the powerful President himself." (Belated story on Page A1.)

Madrigal said she came out with this information "rather than engage in political hiring" to ask Cayetano "to explain the sudden impasse."

Senate President Pro Tempore Cayetano denied that he suspended the hearings.

Question: exhausted

Cayetano claimed that the Senate had "exhausted all questions" in the past hearings and that the hearings had become long-winded.

He added: Soon after the public would see another hearing. (Cayetano could not give a specific date.

Aside from admitting that to know so early at last week that there would be no hearings this week, Cayetano said there would also be no hearings for the next 10 to 14 days after the Senate goes into recess and the ordered wiretapping group (TWG) takes over the investigation.

Cayetano said that it would still depend on the TWG whether there would be a need for eliminating during the break.

Villar: Probe to continue

But Senate President Manuel Villar and heads of key committees are determined to see the investigation through.

"I will still push for a closure on this controversy. The investigation should be concluded while legislation that will make transactions of this nature transparent and open for public scrutiny," Villar said.

But some senators said Press Secretary Macapagal-Arroyo's decision to cancel the NBN deal with Zhong Xing Telecommunication Equipment (ZTE) could have hastened the inquiry mood.

Ms Arroyo, who met Chinese President Hu Jintao in Shanghai on Tuesday, said he had expressed understanding after she explained that the deal had to be canceled.

Culprits who nearly got away

Senate Majority Leader Francisn Pangilinan insisted on overlooking the inquiry into the deal, which has been marred by allegations of overpricing and tainted with bribery offers.

"We have succeeded in preventing what supposedly to be another billion-peso white elephant in the making. Still we need to shed light on who the real culprits are, who nearly got away with this enormous loan transaction," Pangilinan said.

He said there was a need for the public to know what Ms Arroyo did, if any, when she was informed of the P130-million bribe offered early this year to Romulo Neri, then director general of the National Economic and Development Authority.

He is denied news likely that Malacañang will allow its officials, including Neri, to appear again at the Senate inquiry now that the ZTE deal has been scrapped.

Sidetracked

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he personally did not see why the Senate should consider us its inquiry.

Noting what his lawyer friends had told him, Ermita said the purpose of the hearings had been "sidetracked" by the cancellation of the ZTE deal and by the resignation of Benjamin Abalos Jr as chair of the Commission on Elections.

Abalos has been accused of brokering the deal in exchange for kickbacks.

"If the contract is canceled, there I don't see what else ... would the committee or trade wish to look into," Ermita said.

GMA's political instinct

Ermita said the President's "political instinct" could have directed her to decide to scrap the ZTE deal.

House Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who introduced the resolution calling for an inquiry into the NBN deal, believed Ms Arroyo intended for the contract to defeat public dissatisfaction and to persuade the Senate to end its probe.

"There is no chance on questionable deals until the questions are answered and the truth is out," Pimentel said.

He said that the Senate hearings on the deal that Abalos, Dave Consolco chair, was accused of offering bribes to Neri and Jose "Joey" de Venecia III.

De Venecia said Abalos had offered him $130 million in his company's name and that the same official proposed to embroider the NBN project.

Abalos has denied Neri and De Venecia's allegations.

He resigned his Comelec post on Monday in the wake of an unprecedented complaint filed against him.

There were also allegations that Ms Arroyo's husband tried to bully De Venecia to "back off" from the project.

Tighten procurement law

One of the exclusive of the inquiry law, Manuel Roxas II, said the inquiry would also zero in on ways to tighten the procurement law so that all government projects have to go through public bidding and check and balance.

"This project should never have been started nor approved in the first place," said Roxas, trade and economics committee chair.

"We need to tighten the approval process for foreign-aided and -funded projects to protect the people's interests, and prevent this reckless diplomatic fiasco from ever happening again," Roxas said.

Overtaken by events

Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and John Ammon, who belong to the administration bloc, said that the cancellation of the ZTE contract rendered the Senate inquiry "moot."

Enrile said the Senate could let public prosecutors handle the investigation of the bribery and corruption charges.

Senator Joseph Estrada said the Senate had "done its job" and should "stop there."

"I think our shouldn't waste time up already so the committee report can be prepared ... For her interest in this because it's been overtaken by events," he said.

But Arroyo said he would prefer that his ethics committee continue with the probe because he's heard the details of the first 20 days of the executive session to the hearing. The hearing report did not say that in four sessions were minutes. There some other people inside the room where the senators had their executive session on Sept. 27.]

Multi-sectoral groups

Outside the Senate, former Chief Neptar and members of multi-sectoral groups voiced disappointment changes against government officials where they believe must be held culpable for violations of the code of conduct for public servants and for plunder despite the shelving of the NBN deal.

"This is far from having a closure," Neptar said the hearings.

He said there were violations committed even if the deal had been shelved. While reports from Christian V. Esguerra and Jeannette I. Andrade

$460-M Cyber Education deal not scrapped, says Favila

From page A1

Favila denied rumors that a company owned by the son of Chinese President Hu Jintao was involved in the $460.38-peso education project.

"Rumors? I don't think so. When it comes to the Chinese leadership, we know how careful they are. They will not tolerate this kind of practice," Favila said.

Supplier's credit

He, however, said the $320-million loan facility from the Chinese government which the Philippines was going to use for the broadband project through China Eximbank, is still available.

"That remains to be a supplier's credit," he said. "It is up to the Philippine government for other projects that the Philippine government wishes to undertake," he said.

Favila told reporters that the President had not terminated the other agreements he signed in Honolulu, Hubei, China, on April 27.

"The broadband project will be discontinued. The rest will be suspended," he said.

Favila denied rumors that a company owned by the son of Chinese President Hu Jintao was involved in the $460.38-peso education project.

Other deals signed five months ago were:

- A $4.04-million contract to export mango pulp to China. It was signed by Antonio Tui, Mabuhay Enterprises chief executive officer, and Jianhua Li, president of the Chinese firm Guangzhou Dong Li.
- A $46-million deal to ship bananas to China for five years. It was signed by Fernando Martinez, president of Eastern Petroleum, and Pan Bai Jian, chair of the Chinese firm Shipping Import and Export Trade Co. Ltd.
- A $66.46-million loan from the Chinese government for the upgrade and repair of the Angat Dam. It was signed by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System for the Philippine government, and Chen Jiuyi, national water and Electric Corp. for the Chinese government.

The documents he all three deals were allegedly stolen along with the copies of the NBN and CIE contracts.

Why Cyber Ed not axed

Favila clarified that $460-million loan CEP could not be scrapped because "what was signed by two months ago, along with the National Broadband Network (NBN) deal was only a memorandum of agreement between the Department of Education and University of Hong Kong.

The NBN, MOA, but the CEPI. There's nothing yet beyond that. And according to Education Secretary Jesli Lapus, they will have it suspended," he said.

On Sept. 23, the Implementation of both the NBN and CEP projects was suspended by Ms Arroyo.

She blamed "political noise" for her decision.

Favila said Ms Arroyo gave no reason for observing a status quo on the other projects.

Ms Arroyo also ordered the Department of Education (DepEd) would not recommend the lifting of the suspension order on CEP.

Lapus said he would "leave it to the better judgment of President Macapagal-Arroyo and the National Economic and Development Authority."

Instead, the department "will continue with its various [information technology] initiatives," Lapus told the Inquirer yesterday.

He said the DepEd would continue to use IT to reach out to public schools in the remotest areas and train teachers and education supervisors to connect and deliver content via cyberspace.

Lapus, however, lamented that the IT projects "will only be on pilot scales."

Education system deprived

"The entire education system will still be deprived," he noted.

This year, the DepEd is spending P200 million on its computerization program. Government funding for IT-related projects totaled P570 million in 2006 and 2006.

Lapus has expressed dismay over the suspension of the CEP but also said he was optimistic it would soon be back on track.

The books, which evaluate government projects, earlier approved the CEP because it would be beneficial to teachers and students, he pointed out.

The CEP is undertaken with cooperation with a Chinese firm, aims to bridge the learning gap between urban and rural schools by using satellite technology to beam televised lectures to students and teachers in far-flung areas.

The satellite-based distance learning program is capable of broadcasting lectures by the best teachers from DepEd model schools to other public schools nationwide.

The program, which targets a total of 37,794 public schools in the rural three years with access to computer and 15-in satellite stations, is the "best thing to happen to Philippine education," according to Lapus.

Embarrassing

Favila made the clarification a day after Ms Arroyo informed President Hu Jintao during a (classified dinner bilateral meeting in Shanghai that she had decided to discontinue the NBN project. Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Ms Arroyo took it upon herself to explain "in the Chinese president her difficult decision."

"Said the President consulted on the good relationship between the Government and Filipinos, who were with Ms Arroyo during the meeting.

In an interview with reporters, Bunye said "when you cannot maximize again, expose to ... [it] to [disabled]."

Favila explained that Ms Arroyo accepted the whole NBN project "because of the economy and the refusal of ... some senators to understand what the project was all about."

"The President could done estimate to that project no matter how the ZTE explains it ... so might as well [cut it]," Favila said.

"We just to put it to rest [she decentered it] Upon it's really embarrassing to the Chinese government and the President [Ms] just decided to discontinue it."

Razon breaks silence, says too busy to be part of NBN-ZTE project

From page A1

broke his silence and refused to allegations linking him to the $329-million ZTE Corp.-National Broadband Network (NBN)-COMELEC deal.

Razon, 47, also dismissed claims he had threatened then Budget Secretary Romulo Neri of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) for supporting the ejecting of a rival container port in Manila.

Too busy

In a statement sent to the Inquirer nearly a week after his name cropped up in the ZTE probe, Razon said he was too busy to be involved in the ZTE deal.

"It's a year, I spend almost 200 days out of the country. How could I possibly find time to participate in these political issues? My business is in 10 countries aside from the Philippines so how can my time be involved in politics help me in these 10 countries? It just doesn't make sense!"

Aside from the Philippines, ICTSI operates in China, Brazil, Poland, Madagascar, Japan, Indonesia, Syria, Ecuador, Colombia and Georgia.

Senators Aquilino Madrigal and Rodolfo Biazon have called on the heads, for sorting posts lying to appear before the Senate blue ribbon committee probe by investigating the NBN deal.

But, Senate blue ribbon committee chair Miriz Defensor Santiago that there was no need to invite Razon because he was brought up in connection with the Neri issue, not the deal, which was not covered by the ZTE probe.

"His name has been handled in media. I'm being part of the ZTE deal, and should it be proven that he has knowledge of ZTE, all witnesses should be called," Madrigal said.

Biazon said Razon should explain in the same Senate forum where Neri had claimed that Razon had arrested him and told him "you will allow Lubbot Corp. to operate or else I will put bullet."

Neri had planned to allow Harbour Centre to enter the container port operations.

Razon said the denials "are reports going around that indeed Mr. Biazon had been the treasurer in a way of loan. Today during the campaign period. I don't know if that is true, but since there is an intimation from Mr. Neri that I have been a treasurer, this Mr. coming from that direction we have to examine why this is a threat."

A critic not enemy of Neri

Razon claimed he was a "critic" and not "enemy of Neri."

Razon said that while he disagreed with Neri on port liberalization (he called it Neri's modelling in port policies), "Neri now has an axe to grind against me, and is even going so far as to drag me into the NBN-ZTE scandal."

"The ZTE scandal is an issue involving people who have no business involving themselves in government contracts such as government officials and children of government officials. I would never get involved in such an unseemly affair," said Razon.

Contrary to Neri's claim that the confrontation was made at the Speaker's home early this year, Razon said he approached Neri during a dinner almost two years ago to explain the situation of ICTSI.

"Not true obviously. There was no shouting of invectives, inhalations or even raising of voices. It was a function for a head of state, and proper decorum was called for. And the president of International Container was standing close to where this happened. Neri has blown it out of all proportion."

Razon said there was no household help to witness the alleged shouting incident and thus this was his only encounter with Neri.

Nothing to do with transfer

Razon denied that he had a hand in Neri's transfer from the Neda to the Commission on Higher Education. "I had also, totally nothing to do with that. I am only a businessman after all."

Razon maintained that "ICTSI is all for the liberalization of the Philippine ports service, but it has to be on a level playing field for all the players and that container issue's have to be fostered."

After explaining the Neri meeting, Razon said he had gone to the young De Venecia "who seems to be enjoying his newfound fame, and a refreshing himself into matters he has no knowledge of whatsoever."

"He has decided to get back at me for our rejection of his opinion, he will even try to drag me into an issue that I have nothing to do with," Razon said.

Ms Ann de Venecia DE's claims that he engaged in a shouting match with his father, House Speaker Jose de Venecia, to their house, Razon said: "The Speaker is a friend of mine, and we have had many animated conversations, but I have never berated him. At the very least, the Speaker should have the decency to clarify the statements made by his son."

Erap cries foul over 'Pinoy Times' advertisement

From page A1

that had bombarded the first President, with a headline saying how easy it was to forget his "sins" ("Mga sensor si Erap ang dami nang nakalimot sa mga kasalanan niya").

More of the same

But yesterday's ad is not the last of it, according to Ingreso II. Agustin, who claims the bombardment will continue.

"The ad will come out three or four more times," Agustin, the founding chair of the Inquirer and a recipient of the Ramon Magsaysay Award for journalism, told the Inquirer when reached on the phone for comment.

He also added that a collection of all the old issues of Pinoy Times Special Edition would soon hit the stands for P200 each.

Estrada said the ad, which he described as a "new and more insidious demolition job" against him, was published to "destroy public confidence in the truth political enemy brought by the controversial P329-million National Broadband Network deal with China's ZTE Corp.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, whom Estrada was engaged in a word war over the scrapped deal, agreement that was reportedly tainted by bribery and bribery attempts.

"Here we be silent argument to personal hatred," Estrada said. "It would be no much easier if those in power simply addressed the people's concerns on these scandals instead of looking for convenient scapegoats every time they run into trouble."

Free country

Estrada's spokesperson, Ginggoy de Chio-Bejo, Rufio Bejo-Reguero, said the publication of the ad was equivalent to "looking a man [who is] at the lowest point of his life."

But Agustin said: "This is a free country. He [Estrada] is welcome to say what he likes."

He said the people had to be reminded of Estrada's offenses, "because everybody wants him to be registered."

Maintaining his distance talks with Estrada on a possible presidential pardon.

Agustin said the Inquirer was at first reluctant to oppose to the idea because, he said, it means an admission of guilt.

He gradually warmed to it and then rejected it again, saying there would be no more discussion of the matter until Estrada's camp "has come to him."

"Now,

NEWS

BIG PRAYERS
Senate employees spread out a giant rosary made of balloons in front of the Senate building for peace and unity in the country in observance of the Holy Rosary month.

Ex-general beats raps in RSBS land deal

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE GOVERNMENT HAS LOST A P2.46-billion estafa case against retired Brig. Gen. Jose Ramstad Jr. in connection with an irregular land deal that allegedly helped to bleed dry the military's pension fund in 1997.

The Sandiganbayan 3rd Division, however, upheld Ramstad's indictment on a separate graft charge for the same transaction that allegedly siphoned funds from the Armed Forces' Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS) which Ramstad headed at the time.

Charged with Ramstad were Mercedes Enriquez Bello and Manuel Jongko, the then legal division chief and chief of the documentation department of the RSBS, respectively.

Ramstad is facing 17 counts of graft and 22 counts of falsification of public documents in various divisions involving more than P1.80 million for the allegedly irregular acquisition of real estate in Tarazan, Batangas between 1996 and 1997.

Not enough evidence

In clearing the respondents on the estafa charge, the antigraft court said that state prosecutors did not present sufficient evidence to pin down Ramstad and his coaccused.

Court records showed that the P2.46-million was drawn from the RSBS to purchase a 1.22-hectare property in Tarazan, Batangas on Feb. 21, 1997.

But an Ombudsman investigation found that the Registry of Deeds of Tarazan showed that only a quarter of the amount, or P435,495, was paid to the landowners.

It was later found that the P621,691 price was cited in the new land title issued to the AFP pension fund, and that the amount of P2.46 million was never considered as a basis for the transfer.

The Sandiganbayan said that the RSBS officials caused undue injury to the government amounting to P0.04 million, representing the discrepancy in the purchase price for the Tarazan property.

"Despite their awareness of the existence of two deeds of sale containing contradictory prices, they still gave their approval to the release of funds," the court said.

However, the court said that state prosecutors failed to prove that the RSBS officials pocketed the money for their private benefit.

"Misappropriation or conversion may be proved by the prosecution by direct evidence or by circumstantial evidence. The prosecution failed to prove either," it said.

Spy agency spooked by media moles

By Terry Quismundo

IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE ONE OF THE MOST secretive intelligence agencies in the country. So how come the controversy over its internal reorganization is all over the newspapers?

According to insiders, a "crackdown" of sorts has begun in the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (Nica) after disgruntled personnel leaked to the media documents detailing the agency's recent revamp.

Yesterday morning, when the report on the controversial reorganization hit the front pages, Nica executives allegedly told employees that they wouldn't be questioned.

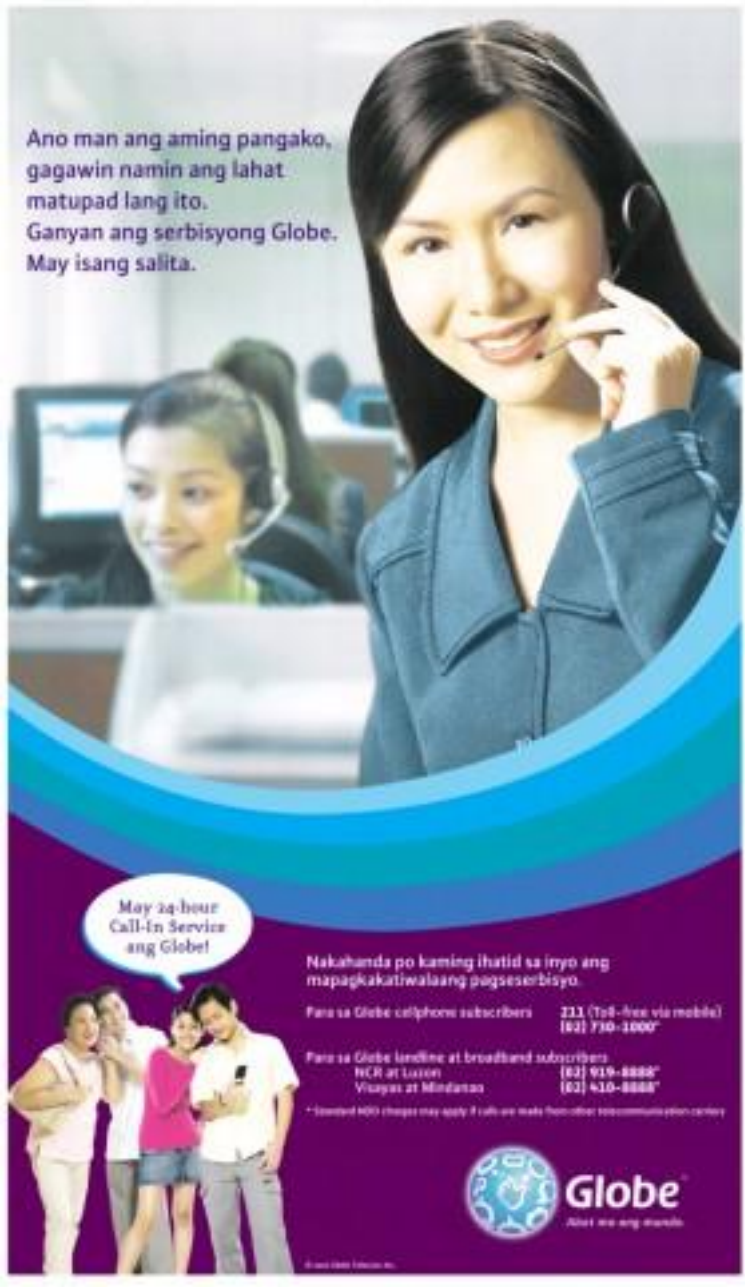
And so far, no one has reported to call the dark, such employees would have to undergo a lie-detector test, an insider said.

Some Nica employees feel left the revamp favored employees close to the powers-that-be and said so in surreptitiously circulated white papers, office chit-chat and even letters to colleagues in regional offices.

Nica employees who had spoken to the Inquirer on condition of anonymity said they hoped the leak would lead of a review of some 300 plum positions distributed laterally, seven to employees with questionable qualifications.

The insiders claimed a special committee tasked to screen employees for the new positions chose close friends... even if it meant disregarding the requirements of rank and degree.

The reorganization was prompted by an executive order issued by President Macapagal-Arroyo in 2002, which underlined the need for Nica "to be sufficiently responsive to challenges of the new millennium."



Aplus METRO
Editor Evan C. Ilpangat
mobile news

NBI gives doc's son one week to show up

By Tina G. Santos

MIGUEL "MIGO" CRUZ HAS UNTIL NEXT week to appear at the National Bureau of Investigation to shed light on the case of suspected hitting victim Cris Anthony Mendoza (See related story below).

Cruz reportedly brought Mendoza to their house in Congressional Village, Project 8, Quezon City. The victim was then taken to Cruz's cousin Aubrey Penaranda, at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center.

The elder Cruz, through his lawyers Paulino Mallé, asked the NBI to give his son one (1) week/saturday to present himself to investigators, according to Bernabe Ani, chief of the bureau's anti-terrorism division.

"Ms. Mallé said Dr. Cruz was trying to convince his son to appear and cooperate in the investigation," Ani said.

The younger Cruz is a law student at the University of the Philippines and reportedly a neophyte of Sigma Rho, the fraternity that Mendoza was allegedly trying to join.

"When is young and gullible, Mendoz he was the one asked by the group to bring Mendoz to the hospital since his father is a doctor," the lawyer said.

Without stating that hazing actually occurred, Mallé said Mendoz's injuries were "obviously hazing marks."

SLOW NIGHT
A driver drives idle for passengers along Roxas Boulevard in Manila in front of the Baywalk. The strip is now a quiet haven for visitors who like eating leisurely strolls and watching glorious sunsets.

Foul smell sends 6 persons to Pasig hospital

'Hazardous' waste found in factory yard

By Erlinder L. Alinor

SIX PERSONS, INCLUDING three children, were rushed to the hospital after inhaling noxious chemicals from a nearby warehouse early yesterday morning.

The six were released from the hospital on the same day.

Raquel Santiagojan, chief of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office, said the office of the mayor sent the Del Ichi Electronics Manufacturing Corp. in E. Legaspi St., Barangay Maybunga, a notice of violation of local and national laws on the disposal of hazardous wastes.

He said the company was ordered to cease the operation of three days and to remove the chemical containers with Del at a temporary warehouse.

At about 9 a.m. yesterday, residents of a building in Barangay Maybunga noticed a foul odor in the air. Health and rescue officials neared the smell to the Del Ichi warehouse. Backpages said they found containers of chemicals at the back of the warehouse that were not disposed of properly.

He said the chemicals and gases were classified as "low to moderate hazardous wastes" from the company's factory in Barangay Sumilang. Del Ichi manufactures speakers and audio systems.

Residents of the six-story BLISS Building 6 experienced breathing difficulty and eye and throat irritation, the barangay said. Sent to the Pasig City General Hospital for treatment were Belinda Garcia, Lene Garcia, and Jessie Guiam, and three children who were not identified.

A television crepair opened an employee of the company saying Del Ichi had the necessary permits and clearance.

Decision on case vs UP frat members vital to cops' probe

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE QUEZON CITY POLICE DISTRICT (QCPD) is awaiting the decision on the administrative charges filed against 12 members of the Sigma Rho fraternity before the student disciplinary tribunal of the University of the Philippines (UP) in Diliman to further bolster its case against members of the fraternity believed to be involved in the suspected hazing death of senior public administration student Cris Anthony Mendoz.

"The decision of the tribunal will definitely further strengthen our case against the persons we have identified to be responsible for the victim's death," Senior Supt. Ary Bienvenido of the QCPD Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit legal division said.

But senior issued that they do not want any legal loopholes, which the suspects may look for, to escape culpability. "We are working carefully and keeping our cards close to our chests," he added.

He said the QCPD-CIDU has not stopped investigating the suspected hazing death of Cris even if they feel they have enough evidence to support criminal charges against the perpetrators involved.

"We really want an air tight case against the suspects. We do not want them to get away from facing responsibility for Mendoz's death," Bienvenido stressed.

Meanwhile, UP Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs Elizabeth Enriquez said the student disciplinary tribunal (SDT) may take longer than expected regarding the administrative case filed by the Diliman Legal Office (DLO) against officers and members of the Sigma Rho.

She clarified that the SDT is a completely independent tribunal, and when they would resume its functions it extends depending on its members who may summon witnesses for further questioning.

The SDT is composed of three members, headed by lawyer Jonathan Sale. Two two more members—a parent juror and a student juror—may be added to the group.

Should the SDT find the students facing administrative charges guilty, the sanctions could range from suspension to expulsion, depending on the gravity of the offense.

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Pasig lawyer charged with double murder

By Krisdaler L. Abner

PASIG CITY LEGAL CITY LEGAL DEpartment lawyer Manuel Hernandez Jr. is facing double murder charges for allegedly shooting to death two persons in Pasig City Tuesday afternoon.

Hernandez accused Chilling Edgardo Gutierrez, 49, a Makati City resident and coordinator in Pahayagang Plaridel, and Katherine Palmero, 27, a Bora Manila, Quezon City resident.

Police said Hernandez, a city civil employee and a nephew of Manila mayoralty Junior Joey Hernandez, was charged in the Pasig City Prosecutor's Office yesterday afternoon.

Pasig City police chief Sr. Supt. Frank Uyami said witnesses "positively identified" Hernandez and his vehicle.

Hernandez spent almost a day in the office of the Pasig City police investigation division. Police said he confronted with his relatives and lawyers. Hernandez, however, has yet to give the police his side. He also refused to talk to the media.

Uyami said the accused refused to undergo a paraffin test Tuesday night and signed a waiver at the laboratory.

Police arrested Hernandez in his residence in Barangay Kapitolyo. The incident that occurred around 1:30 p.m. Tuesday allegedly was a case of road rage.

Investigators said Hernandez's Toyota Corolla vehicle and Gutierrez' Nissan Grand Livina collided on Gen. Romo St. at the corner of Shaw Boulevard. Witnesses said the two argued and Gutierrez yelled insults at Hernandez.

Hernandez allegedly took a gun from his car and fired at Gutierrez. The victim sustained four shots and died on the spot. Hernandez then shot Palmero, who died en route to the Medical City Tuesday afternoon.

Police said they seized Hernandez's through his car's plate number (DEP-457). Hernandez did not report. But the police has not found the 9 mm gun used in the shooting.

Apart from two counts of murder, Hernandez could be charged for violation of the Commission on Elections gun ban included for the coming barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections.

SAVING TREES

Pelosa property developer Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) helps save trees as its first office development project in Quezon City, the UP North Science and Technology Park. In support of the company's pro-environment program, runners trees within ballast and relocated within the project site to avoid having to chop them down to make way for soon to rise office buildings.

Senate deviating from core issue in NBN scandal

THE SENATE SHOULD NOT DEVIATE FROM the core issue in the National Broadband Network (NBN) scandal by trying to ferret out the identities of the senators who allegedly ill-talked what transpired during the closed-door executive session last week in the Senate.

The issue is to what extent was President Gloria's involvement in the shelling deal government with Chinese ZTE Corp. that she herself has now scrapped.

The executive session was called because former Socioeconomic Development Assistant Secretary Rodolfo Noel refused to reveal the names of his source/s who told him that President Arroyo allegedly ill-talked what transpired during the closed-door executive session last week in the Senate.

ON TARGET

Ramon Jr. Ajuyo

Noel had told reporters before he uncovered the blue ribbon committee that he had informed the President about the $200-million bribe offer allegedly offered to him by the recently resigned Commissioner on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos. And the President, according to Noel, told him not to accept it.

But at the committee hearing, Noel refused to reveal in the open his conversations with the President about the NBN deal.

Noel's decision to remain silent reportedly got very sick, prompting Sen. John Arroyo to call on Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya to lead the former Bids director out of the session room.

Arroyo now wants the identities of the senators who became revealed and the issues discussed.

Everything that takes place during a executive session is secret, and members who make them public can be expelled from the Senate.

The Senate-initiated investigation will amount to nothing, because the Senators will never reveal the identities of its sources.

Any journalist worth his salt will never give away his source of information. He would not only violate a journalist's code of ethics if he did, he would also be destroying his career.

A journalist's job depends on the trust placed on him by persons from whom he gets information.

If Sen. Arroyo insists in pursuing his investigation of the four resolutions of inquiry and the inquiries, he would give the impression that he's trying to protect some people in the Arroyo administration.

Now, which is more important to the busy senator from Bicol, exposing the big-time crooks to send out of jail or to the penitentiary or protecting the identity of the Senate executive session?

Anyway, Noel did not reveal anything of the executive session since he became very sick—he threw up several times—prompting the senators to allow him to leave with Andaya.

* * *

Soon after the committee gathered, Abalos was just a minor player, just like Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza.

Abalos was just the facilitator and Mendoza, the man who implemented the NBN deal.

Through his constant contact with ZTE officials, who played golf with him, Abalos made for an excellent middleman between the major players and ZTE officials.

It is perceived that the major players in the scandal, were what Sen. Teofilo Guingona described as the "Big One" and the "Small One" and a big businessman.

* * *

If this does not divulge the identities of the major and minor players in the NBN scandal, our only hope of identifying them is Philippine Star columnist Jarius Bondoc.

Noel has told everything he knew about the scandal to Jarius, including the names of those involved in the mess.

So for the sake of good government, the honorable blue ribbon committee should ask Jarius to reveal what Noel has told him about the scandal.

By the way, the columnist has filed an affidavit about what Noel told him just to counter anything untoward happens to him.

Apart from his lawyer, copies of the signed statement are now with people Jarius trusts.

HEALTHIER PARTNER

On September 29 the Philippine Dolly Inquirer and United Laboratories Inc. conducted its 10th leg of Hanatoma Medical Mission in Las Piñas area. 118 caseworkers and their immediate families were served in the mission.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. IV-A
[illegible]
October 03, 2007

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMITS (AEP/S)

[illegible]

Name and Address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible]

Atty. JEFFY ROLANDO S. MARTINEZ, MD, CESO III
Regional Director

'Supt. Garcia didn't commit suicide'

By Kenneth del Rosario

"HE DID NOT TAKE HIS OWN LIFE."

This was the assessment of Lino Banong, homicide division chief inspector of the Quezon City District Police Criminal Investigation Division Unit, amidst speculations that Asst. Gen. commander of QCPD station 6, committed suicide.

Garcia's body was found on Saturday night in his Veterans Village House in Quezon City with a bare gunshot wound on the left portion of his chest.

Banong, assigned to lead the investigation of the colonel's death, made the assessment after seeing the origin of the bare and head points on the spot where Garcia's body was discovered.

The point, he said, definitely came from outside the house of the colonel's home, leading police to believe the victim may have had contemplated "salutem" on the night he was found dead.

Banong said they are trying to determine who is the person belong to. QCPD Police Supt. Robert Nielsen said they also found from stacks concerning at the entry point of the president's ground, indicating that Garcia could have been shot at close range.

Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) announces that the following are the candidates considered for the (2) positions of ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE COURT OF APPEALS vice Hon. Renato C. Dacudao and Hon. Arsenio J. Magpale:

1. ALHAMBRA, REYNALDO A.
2. AYSON, RUBEN C.
3. BARRIOS, MANUEL M.
4. BORRETA, ABRAHAM B.
5. CORNEJO, MA. CRISTINA J.
6. CRUZ, ANGELITA A.
7. DUMDUM, SIMEON JR. P.
8. GACUTAN, ANGELITA A.
9. GAERLAN, SAMUEL H.
10. GARVILLES, EDGAR G.
11. GENILO, LITA S.
12. HERRERA, OSCAR JR. C.
13. INOTURAN, NAPOLEON E.
14. LACAP, MERCEDES P.
15. LAGUNDIMUNI, LILY LYDIA A.
16. LLOREN, EDGARDO T.
17. MACALINO, FLORITO S.
18. MAYO, MANUEL A.
19. PARREÑO, VICTORIA ISABEL A.
20. PERALTA, EDUARDO B. JR.
21. PONFERRADA, THELMA A.
22. ROSALES, ANTONIO M.
23. SADIANG, MELCHOR Q.
24. SORONGON, EDWIN D.
25. TANGUANCO, ESMERALDO C.
26. VILLASOR, BOWEN A.
27. YAP, MARILYN L.
28. ZALAMEDA-ROSS, V.

The public may submit sworn complaint, written report, or opposition against any of the aforesaid candidates not later than 15 October 2007 to the JBC Secretariat, 2nd Flr., Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Manila (Tel. No. 552-9512; Fax No. 552-9599; e-mail address jbc@supremecourt.gov.ph; jbc_supremecourt@yahoo.com.ph).

Conformably with Section 1, Rule 7 of the Rules of the JBC (JBC-009), as amended, the public is hereby invited to the panel interview on 30 October 2007 at the Division Hearing Room, Ground Floor, New Supreme Court Building of the following candidates:

9:00 A.M. – 12:00 NOON	2:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.
1. CORNEJO, MA. CRISTINA J.	5. GENILO, LITA S.
2. GACUTAN, ANGELITA A.	6. ROSALES, ANTONIO M.
3. GAERLAN, SAMUEL H.	7. SADIANG MELCHOR QUIRINO C.
4. GARVILLES, EDGAR G.	8. YAP, MARILYN L.

The other candidates had already been interviewed by the JBC in June 2007.

Further, in view of the insufficient number of applicants for the positions of Chairman and Regular Members of the Legal Education Board, the submission of applications or recommendations is extended to 24 October 2007.

3 October 2007

MA. LUISA D. VILLAMARIA
Clerk of Court & JBC
Ex Officio Secretary

Ham too early for Yuletide

By Julie Aurelio

TEN TONS OF spoiled pork meat was seized from a container van in Pasay City early yesterday morning during a joint operation conducted by the city veterinary office.

The seized meat, which had not been refrigerated, was now supposed to be distributed to Metro Manila in time for the Christmas season, City veterinary official Dr. Rodolfo Bonoan said they stumbled upon the find as around 1:30 a.m. after chasing a tip from a concerned citizen.

The seized meat did not have a meat inspection clearance according to Mayor Nieconito Trinidad.

Polish envoy hurt in Iraq bomb attack

BAGHDAD—POLAND'S AMbassador to Iraq was wounded on Wednesday when his diplomatic convoy was hit by a series of bombs in central Baghdad, which Polish officials described as an assassination attempt.

Iraqi police said nine civilians were killed in the attacks and five people were wounded, including three embassy officials.

"It was an assassination attempt, but three cars drove on to us intact," a Polish foreign ministry spokesperson said in Warsaw.

"At first people are wounded. Our ambassador, Gen. Edward Pietrzyk scrambled out [of the wreckage] on his own."

Poland backed the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 which toppled Saddam Hussein and currently has around 1,000 troops in the country.

The explosions took place on a busy road in the Arasat district of central Baghdad.

Reuters Television pictures showed a Polish armoured Iveco truck with its hood, fog and bonds bandaged being evacuated in a helicopter which landed in the street.

Iraqi soldiers and the army, who were wounded by rescuing Iraqis and troops, was the Polish ambassador. They said other wounded people had been taken by vehicle to the heavily fortified Green Zone for treatment.

There were appeared to have been hit in the attack. Two of them were completely burnt out and the third, a sports utility vehicle with shuttered windows, carried a red and white looking diplomatic flag, a witness said.

The street had been blocked off by Iraqi security forces.

Several diplomats have been killed by suspected al-Qaida militants in Baghdad since the 2003 invasion. Last year four Bosnian diplomats were abducted and killed.

In 2005 militants said they had killed Egyptian mission chief Ihab el-Sherif and Khaled's convoy was shot and wounded when gunmen opened fire on his car.

Iraqi security forces, backed by thousands of extra US troops, have imposed a security crackdown across the Iraqi capital in recent months in a effort to curb sectarian fighting and militant attacks.

Both Baghdad and Washington say the campaign has led to a clear reduction in violence. But a group led by Sunni Islamist al-Qaida in Iraq pledged last month to step up attacks to mark the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. *Reuters*

IRAQI soldiers inspect the site of an attack targeting the Polish ambassador's convoy in Baghdad's al-Arasat neighborhood on Oct. 3. AFP

1,000 troops home by Christmas, says Brown

BASRA—BRITAIN'S PRIME MINISTER GORdon Brown announced on Tuesday during a visit to Iraq that 1,000 British troops could be home by Christmas as he aims to hand control of Basra province back to the Iraqis within two months.

"I believe that by the end of the year the British forces which have been 5,500 can be reduced to 4,000 and by Christmas 1,000 of our troops will be coming back to the UK for other purposes," Brown said.

"I believe that within the next two months we can move to provincial Iraqi control [of Basra]. But it is Iraqi taking responsibility at their own security." White House spokesperson Dana Perino said in response to Washington that the United States had no objections to the planned drawdown. 500 of which had been flagged by the British defense ministry on Sept. 6.

After meeting Iraqi counterpart Nouri al-Maliki in Baghdad on his maiden visit to Iraq since succeeding Tony Blair in June, Brown traveled on to visit British troops based at Basra airport.

"What you are doing here is making a huge difference," Brown told 200 troops and members of the US and Australian militaries in a five-minute speech at the British base at Basra airport.

"You're building a democracy by sustaining those people who want the people of the country and not the terrorists to control the future of the country. You've taken, you've sustained and I am incredibly proud of you." Earlier, Maliki assured journalists after shortly meeting Brown that Iraqi forces were ready to take over from the British in the southern oil province. *AFP*

7 Miami men plotted to overthrow US, says prosecutor

MIAMI—SEVEN MEN PLOTted to bring down the US government by possessing explosives and bombing landmark buildings, a prosecutor told Miami jurors in the first terrorism conspiracy trial opened on Tuesday.

The "Liberty City Seven" aimed to create chaos as part of a holy war to pave the way for al-Qaida affiliates to take over the United States, Assistant US Attorney Richard Gregorie said in the prosecution's opening statement.

"We need to make the people go crazy in the streets," Gregorie quoted alleged ringleader Narseal Batiste as saying.

"Allah is going to take over the whole us."

Defense lawyers said the charges were "nonsense" supplied by the government and surfaced soon after they gathered in a run-down warehouse, were arrested in 2006 on charges of planning to blow up Chicago's 110-story Sears Tower—the tallest US skyscraper—along with several FBI offices and the Miami federal court complex where they are on trial.

The young men face up to 70 years in prison if convicted on all four conspiracy counts in a case prosecutors officials have touted as an important victory in the war against terrorism.

But federal agents said when they were arrested that the group's plans were "aspirational" rather than operational and pointed to real threats because they had neither al-Qaida contacts nor access of carrying out attacks.

The government's main evidence is drawn from 15,000 audio and videotaped conversations made by the informants. One informed the group and introduced the other, a purported al-Qaida operative from Yemen, to a friend of his quality.

"Unknown to Mr Batiste, it's Uncle Sam," Gregorie said.

Batiste's lawyer, Ana Bosco, portrayed him as a would-be religious leader who aspired to big things but lacked intellect and ability. *Reuters*

Diana inquest opens with accusations

Sputnik blazed a trail 50 years ago

MOSCOW—FOR THREE short, startling or different journeys in the history of space exploration, a beeping sphere speeding across the sky in 1957 seemed at once oddly inspiring and ominous, harbinger of things to come.

Boris Chertok, a key developer of the Sputnik satellite, which celebrates its 50-year launch anniversary on Oct. 4, said he still marvels at the significance of putting a shiny object bad into orbit.

"A day or two after that 'beep-beep' called out around the world, no room as studied as could be expected, but suffice to say the Soviet media understood the significance of our achievement," said Chertok.

Chertok and a team of engineers worked with Sergei Korolyov, the father of the Soviet space industry, to construct the R-7 rocket as a delivery vehicle for intercontinental ballistic missiles, and saw Sputnik as an auspicious feat, secondary project.

"The majority of Korolyov's assistants, among whom I must include myself, out of dislike, headedness and a lack of foresight, thought this was all a childish plaything, this Sputnik," Chertok told reporters at the Russian Museum in Moscow last week.

Reuters drew the team of engineers to grow lengths to put the Soviet Union into space ahead of the United States.

To do that, Korolyov reasoned, the Soviet would need to fly across the Americas and make themselves heard, above, and beyond developing a rocket that could deliver atomic bombs into America's heartland.

Yuri Gagarin, Soviet cosmonaut who became the first man to orbit the Earth, and Chertok, now 95, but still putting in two days a week are remembered as Russian rocket manufacturers Energiya.

Reuters

LONDON—THE INQUEST INto Princess Diana's death in a Paris car crash 10 years ago opened on Tuesday with accusations that the British royal family ordered her death.

Mohamed al-Fayed, whose son Dodi died in the crash at his third Ritz high-profile summer romance with Diana, said the couple were killed on the orders of Queen Elizabeth's husband, Diana's former father-in-law.

Even among of accusations found in court by the judge, the course of London's history threads were said the royal family could not bear the idea of Diana marrying a Muslim.

Major investigations by French and British police have concluded the deaths were a tragic accident caused by a speeding driver, who was found to be drunk. But both have rejected Fayed's conspiracy theories.

Lord Justice Scott Baker said Fayed alleged in a prepared statement that the royal family "could not accept that an Egyptian Muslim could contract to be married to the future king of England (Diana's eldest son Prince William)." "It is his belief that a decision was taken to kill both Diana and Dodi. He places Prince Philip at the heart of the conspiracy."

The judge told the jury: "You will have to listen carefully to the witnesses you hear to see whether there is any evidence to support this assertion."

Diana, 36, Dodi al-Fayed, 42, and chauffeur Henri Paul were killed when their Mercedes car crashed in a road tunnel as they sped away from the Ritz Hotel in Paris, pursued by paparazzi.

In Strasbourg, the European Court of Human Rights rejected Fayed's complaint that there were covered deaths caused in the Brussels investigations, saying there was no "independent reasoning the circumstances of the death of the applicant's son Dodi being also related."

Fayed said Diana was pregnant with Dodi's child said that the couple were planning to announce their engagement. *Reuters*

Asteroid is named for 'Star Trek' actor George Takei

NEW YORK—"STAR TREK" AC-tor George Takei has been chosen as the namesake of the asteroid formerly known as the 1994 UZ79.

The asteroid, located between Mars and Jupiter, has been assigned 79467 Takei, in honor of the actor who is best known for his role as Hikaru Sulu in the original "Star Trek" series.

"I am now a heavenly body," Takei said on Tuesday, laughing. "I found out about it yesterday—I was driving along, minding my own business, and suddenly my cell phone sounds into America's heartland.

Starstruck fanatics were screaming that those who held the Cosmos as ours held the Earth," said Chertok, now 95, but still putting in two days a week as a consultant at Russian rocket manufacturer Energiya.

Reuters

TAKEI

Gene Roddenberry and the show's creator, Nichelle Nichols, who played Lt. Uhura. Other main cast members are already named for actors Walter Koenig and Deforest Kelley.

"It's a great compliment to me as actor," Lieutenant Commander Takei said. "I'm pleased and honored."

Takei, 70, is a longtime gay rights activist who came out publicly in 2005. He starred in the Broadway musical "Allegiance," which opened in November 2015 and closed in January 2016.

Unlike the normal asteroids that offer to sell naming rights to fans, the 1982 committee approved names are actually used by astronomers, said Tom Bridgman, the Mount Holyoke College astronomy professor who proposed the name swap.

"This is the name that will be used for all eternity," he said.

Under the committee's policies, whoever discovers an asteroid has the right to propose a name. After that, the panel considers other suggestions, although it seems would be unwise to avoid anything "in questionable taste" and say names honoring politicians or military figures normally don't start until after they've died.

More promptly, the 70-second Takei has appeared on HBO's "Heroes," playing Hiro Nakamura's Oedipus. He also appears regularly on Howard Stern's satellite radio show. *AP*

The WORLD

Edna Lawrence B. Olasco

Burma ignores int'l outrage; more arrested

RANGOON—BURMA'S (MYANMAR'S) JUNTA ARRESTED more people under the cover of darkness on Wednesday despite a crescendo of international outrage during a keenly watched UN mission to bring an end to a bloody crackdown on protests.

As four eight-truckloads of prisoners were headed out of downtown Rangoon, Burma's biggest city and center of monk-led protests against decades of military rule and deepening economic hardship, witnesses said.

In one house near the Shwedagon Pagoda, the holiest shrine in the deeply Buddhist country and starting point for last week's rallies, only a 12-year-old girl remained. Her parents had been taken in the middle of the night, she said.

The crackdown continued despite some hopes of progress by UN envoy Ibrahim Gambari on his mission to persuade junta chief Than Shwe to release his iron grip and open talks with detained opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, whom he met today.

Singapore, current chair of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) of which Burma is a member, said it "was encouraged by the access and cooperation given by the Burmese government to Mr. Gambari." It also said Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong told Gambari in a meeting that Burma, which rarely responds to efforts by member nations, wanted "national reconciliation and a peaceful transition to democracy" in Burma.

UN sources said Gambari expected to return in early November to Burma, whose generals seldom bow to outside pressure and rarely grant UN officials permission to visit.

However, there were no indications of how his mission and international pressure might change junta policies.

So far, Asean's policy of "constructive engagement" has worked out better than Western sanctions, and the combining of arms industry the junta has not been stopped by Gambari's mission.

REUTERS

Military officer defects to Thailand

BANGKOK—A BURMESE (MYANMAR) military officer has fled to Thailand to seek asylum, apparently because he refused orders to attack Buddhist monks in antijunta protests, a senior Thai intelligence official said on Wednesday.

Maj. Hla Win entered Thailand with help from a non-government organization, and he hopes to apply for asylum in Norway, the official told AFP.

"He is not a senior general, but a mid-ranking," the official said.

Hla Win's defection is the first known case of a military official fleeing the country since the junta last week ordered a crackdown on antigovernment protests.

The Thai official would not say why Hla Win had fled, but Burma watchers said they believed he had refused orders to open fire on Buddhist monks after last week [no 100,000] people met on the streets of Yangon.

At least 13 people were killed and 1,000 arrested in a bloody crackdown on protesters in Yangon.

The protests erupted in mid-August after a hike in the price of fuel, but continued into the biggest threat to the regime in 20 years when Buddhist monks emerged to lead the movement.

AFP

New San Jose Builders, Inc.
Ties up with Philippine National Bank

'Wherever you are in the world, owning a home in the Philippines just got easier'

Oscar Byron T. Mier — Rey L. Vergara

From Left: PNB SVP Rafael Z. Sison, Jr., PNB President & CEO Oscar Byron T. Mier, NSJBI President Rey L. Vergara & First Vice President for International Sales & Marketing Ms. Crisita Bonifacio Lin

The New San Jose Builders, Inc. (NSJBI), one of the Philippines' leading developers, continues to create sensible projects for Filipinos in the country and around the globe with properties like Victoria Towers, Victoria Station and Victoria de Manila under its belt. In line with its commitment to continue to provide quality high-rise residences that are innovative and affordable, it also continues to look for ways to make living overseas a hassle-free experience. It has come up with a website as well as a customer service hotline to allow clients and prospective buyers to access valuable and up-to-date information anytime and anywhere in the world. The company is also set to create satellite offices outside the country. And just before the end of the second quarter of this year, NSJBI has tied up with the Philippine National Bank (PNB) for a faster, safer and more convenient manner of paying for one's dream home.

Present during the signing were PNB officers that included President & CEO Oscar Byron T. Mier, SVP Rafael Z. Sison, Jr., OIC Narciso E. Capito, Jr., AVP Perla P. Jacson, and SM Liberty E. Cruz. Representing NSJBI is its President, Rey L. Vergara and First Vice President for International Sales & Marketing Ms. Crisita Bonifacio Lin. The signing took place last May 31, 2007 at the Filipinana Room, PNB Financial Center, Macapagal Ave., Pasay City, Metro Manila, Philippines.

The Philippine National Bank is a preferred banking institution where most, if not all, Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) maintain an account or more. It offers very good rates and very reasonable charges that make its financial products comparable with other banks. Its presence and affiliates around the country and in almost all of the places where Filipinos work abroad make it very accessible, thus, convenient. "We know for a fact that this project will make it easier for our kababayans to pay for their chosen property. That way, they would be able to invest their money wisely in any of our properties even while working abroad," shares Bonifacio Lin.

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www.newsanjosebuilders.com

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong-il (rear), talks with South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun during a summit meeting in Pyongyang, North Korea, on Wednesday. AP

Korean talks outcome pleases Roh

SEOUL—SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT said on Wednesday after talks with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il that he was pleased with the result, and his spokesperson added the sides were drafting an agreement.

South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun said he was "satisfied with the outcome of the talks," his spokesperson Cheon Ho-seon told the reporters in taped comments relayed from Pyongyang.

Cheon added that the sides would draft an agreement by Thursday morning.

The comments came after Roh and Kim held two sessions of talks in the second-ever summit between leaders of the North and South.

The two Koreas decided on to extend their first summit in seven years after Kim said there had been sufficient discussion between the sides.

"As we had enough dialogue, we don't need to extend" the summit, Kim said after the end of a second session of talks Wednesday with Roh, according to South Korean pool reports. The leaders shook hands at the end of their meetings, both appearing cheerful in video relayed from Pyongyang.

The two Koreas were to issue a joint statement on Thursday morning, according to pool reports.

Roh said he had sought common ground with Kim as they opened formal talks in Pyongyang.

"We didn't reach consensus on everything. There were parts on which our perceptions coincided, and there were other parts" on which the perceptions didn't coincide, Roh said at a luncheon with the South Korean delegation during a pause in his talks with Kim.

"However, what I clearly confirmed a that [Kim] has a firm will about peace and there was consensus that there should be an agreement this time that presents a future direction about peace," Roh said. AP

SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Molmisa Jr. Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Dehesa

V CASIO (right) and Ike Brown fashion roll try to block my layup over Paul Lee and the rampaging Warriors.

UAAP: It's showtime

Warriors eye perfect end to dream season

By Jasmine W. Paya

UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST tries to supply a glorious ending to what started as a dream UAAP basketball season when the Warriors shoot for the championship against the De La Salle Green Archers starting today at the Araneta Coliseum.

The best-of-three title playoffs pair the Warriors (8-6), who won the last of their 14 titles way back in 1985 behind a team led by the now retired Alfie Uichi and Jojo Coddiwa, the prohibitive favorites following their 14-game sweep of the eliminations.

Aside from the motivation of ending a long title drought, the Warriors are hoping to become the first team to grab a 16-game season championship sweep and in the record 19 titles for the Eastern University Tamaraws (9-0).

And the Warriors go into the championship series well-rested against the Archers, who had to go through an emotional and strength-sapping two-game encounter with their fiercest rivals, the Ateneo Blue Eagles, last week to clinch the second title slot.

It is actually De La Sall UB La Salle title confrontation since 1999 and there's an equally interesting sub-plot in the Warriors will be setting out under Dindo Pumaren whose elder brother Perain is coaching the Archers.

"We had a long break, but we've been practicing hard," said Dindo of his Warriors who will be coming off a 10-day rest after clinching the first finals berth in a bonus for winning all 14 assignments in the eliminations round.

"The morale of the team is still high. Even during practice, I can see that the boys' up-get-motivation and intensity are still there," the younger Pumaren added.

University of Santo Tomas was the last team to score a 14-game sweep of the eliminations which automatically rewarded the Tigers the championship in 1993.

The tournament format was changed since then.

And the well-rested Warriors expect to overcome for the seasoned Archers, who actually played three extra games—all against each a red-hotter—to reach the finals.

"We're the underdogs (in the series)," said Feasy. "We want to the usual pressure and it wasn't a bonus."

The Archers fought for the right to host bonus against the Eagles in a playoff for the No. 2 spot, then disposed their rivals again in the second game of their semifinal series, 69-66, last Sunday.

"Instead we're coming from a two-game loss of victory, 14-0 is still 14-0," said Perain. "We didn't lose those (Wednesday) in the last two games."

But Dindo noted that even if the Archers took the longer route, the finals is a familiar spot for their seasoned opponents.

"I don't think they're the underdogs; we are the favorites in the finals," said Dindo. "La Salle's players have championship experience. Feasy has a proven record. They know how it's like to be in the finals."

Dindo also acknowledges the possibility that his older brother's squad is capable of stopping the Warriors' run short.

"Every game there's pressure," said Dindo. "For me, telling the players that 14-0 will mean nothing if we don't win the championship."

Magnolia takes over from SMB

By Marvin B. Carullo

A NEW NAME FOR THE SAME PERSEVERANCE.

San Miguel, the reinvigorated franchise in the history of the Philippine Basketball Association, will be represented by another brand in its conglomerate—Magnolia—when the league's 32nd season blasts off on Oct. 14.

But the core of the team—regarded to be the one to beat in the Philippine Cup—remains intact with a slew of veterans and up-and-comers forming what could stand as two all-star teams rolled into one.

Jimmy Alapag and Danny Ildefonso will return healthy and sharp as ever to lead the Beverage Masters in trying to win for the first Mighty franchise an 18th title in Asia's best play-for-pay league.

"Yes, there is added pressure to win the championship, (because of our strong lineup)," said Alapag during the formal launch of the team's new name yesterday at the San Miguel offices in Ortigas.

"But it is every player's goal to win the championship," he added. "And that is just a new challenge and we welcome that challenge."

San Miguel was the runner-up in the Philippine Cup won by rookie Jason Baldwin Castro last year. But this year's squad added some vital pieces in the recruitment like height, playmaking and outside shooting.

Sweet-shooting outside gunner and former Shoker of the Year Larry Pounces was acquired from Red Bull and 6-foot-8 Jennigan Simon was picked second overall in the draft.

Only Bonian Polo, as far as members of last year's squad are concerned, will not be returning at least for this coming season. The 6-foot-7 PE-American is still recovering from surgery.

Nomura bets falter, share 9th place with HK

THE PHILIPPINES, WITH MARK PENAMACO

Sunday on more than a 1-under-best 8-over-71, fell into a tie for ninth place Wednesday even as Japan reaped silver after two rounds of the 23rd Dynasty Cup at the wind-swept Jumbo Golf and Country Club in Taipei.

Jamil Abdon, who shot the Filipinos with a 73 in the first round, followed it up to 80 and one of the 81 of Teodoro Antolin and Jessie Ryan Lanuevo-matched the PGP-leaded 228 and dropped down a deadlock with Hong Kong at 605.

The Japanese grabbed the lead with a 446 total as Shunsuke Sonoda and Shin Usami shot 73s and Yuki Ito added a 74.

Australia, with Rohan Blizard grabbing the individual lead with a four-under 68, moved up to take second at 443 with Sun-day leader Jbuhl Kwon dropping to third at 444.

Andrew Dodt finished up Blizard with a 71 while Tim Stewart completed the Australian output with a 70.

Thailand, now running fourth at 447 followed by New Zealand (452), host Chinese Taipei (453), Malaysia (459) and India (465).

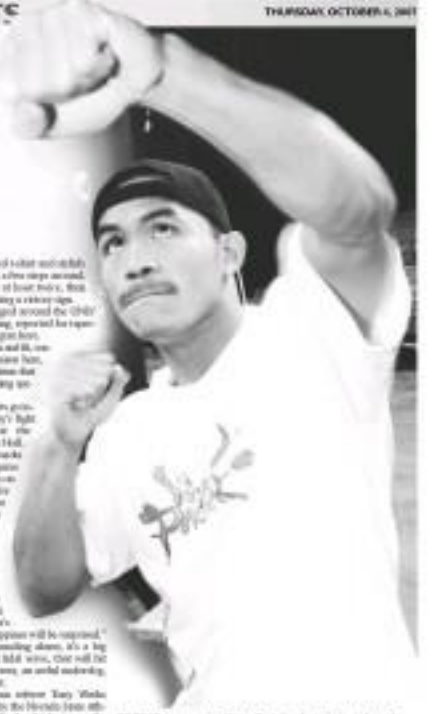
Blizard showed the way in the individual derby with a 36-hole total of 140. Four strokes ahead of teammate Dodt. Japan's Jin and Nozoda Tsunou and New Zealand's Adam Gill.

Abdon and Penamaco were tied for 20th place at 151.

Irrkeenon was running 11th at 97 2s the initial four-to-play, then a count tournament also known as the Asia-Pacific Amateur golf team championship.

BARRERA VOW

'The Philippines will be shocked'



By Recah Trinidad

LAS VEGAS—MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA, already down and out in the eyes and hearts of most Filipino boxing devotees, reminder flavors a thunderous counterpunch at the site of his Oct. 8 rematch with Manny Pacquiao.

SEARING: Unbearable conflicts in

"The Philippines will be shocked," the 33-year-old Mexican southpaw declared with cheering authority.

It was thus the strongest statement on the Pacquiao-Barrera rematch and its impact was notably left all the way in the Philippines.

"He shocked already," said jazz star Richard Merk from his popular club in Makati. "He talks too much, so headliners, please."

Coming from a faith-turned 'amateur known to be at his fiercest best when all the odds are against him, it sounded more of a promise than a threat.

In better flavors easily he held on better days against Pacquiao, who rumbled and stopped him five years ago?

Barrera did not reply. He rolled his sharp, intelligent eyes, then made a limping, noncommittal sigh.

He used to dishonor. In reaches equally. He had, after all, gone to hell to purpose-ing for the rematch.

There were great, unbearable sacrifices," the tough-looking fighter explained through an interpreter. "This fight has become very personal to me."

The effort was the careful evidence for the same protagonists in the Still to Proceed, right at the Mandalay Bowen Convening house of the rematch.

While they were expected to give media people a month view into their conditioned and physical preparations, both Barrera and Pacquiao did not flow their muscles.

Pacquiao, his new, shorter hairdo kept under a reversed baseball cap, did light fancy swinging more of a lazy dancer than a fighter as he "flow you guys," Pacquiao said in the left.

Barrera later went a step further. He stepped inside the ring in a red t-shirt and stylish seven-star jeans, took a few steps around, turned on the spot—at least twice, then demanded after flashing a victory sign.

Pacquiao, who jogged around the GMA compound in the morning, reported his vigorous decision at the Blackgym here.

Barrera, looking slim and fit, continued to train in solitude here, finding evidence to claim that he is preparing something special for Pacquiao.

The two combatants gave to full view for today's fight press conference at the Hotel-Hilton Main Hall.

Weinmiller also marks the day when Pacquiao dramatically rose down on a cool stiffer in time for the official weigh-in at the Senate Center Friday.

In that hotel to change with members of the Philippine media, the glitzes used by the Mexican interpreter from Top Rank in something Barrera's Thrill was "The Philippines will be surprised."

But with the outstanding aliases, it's a big shock, no surprise and blitz wins, that will be the Philippines if Barrera, an awful underdog, makes good his threat.

Meanwhile, veteran referee Tony Weeks has been appointed by the Nevada State Athletic Commission to be the third man in the ring in the Pacquiao-Barrera rematch. With a report from Sabrina Laguardia, Gemmi Bautista

FILIPINO ring executive Manny Pacquiao does a little work on the speed bag during a promotional event for his rematch against Mexico-American Barrera at the Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas.

Treasure chest to Pandora's box?

By Percy D. Della

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA—If it is well known cliche—those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it.

Boxing merchandise are, no doubt, making a new version of the upheavals that before Manny Pacquiao fight Marco Antonio Barrera. Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it every four years.

Allowed to a person, sportswriter or cop like was a one of boxing's most legends.

Allowed to a person, sportswriter or cop also quick to point out that the younger Manny the sport's perpetual motion machine is too much for Marco Antonio.

Needless because would not that what it But with the outcome of Saturday's fight at the Mandalay Bay Event in Las Vegas is certain in their future, their post-fight leverage to the Barrera are all but written.

In Vegas, pulling out-armed bandits in need of parking pass a probable most tempting at the guess.

But what if the knock-of history is lost on Pacquiao, sent on Barrera since his domestic loss at the hands of the Filipino ring magician in San Antonio, Texas in 2003?

Boy, strange things happen. Remember the ant-war wall poster saying that even the best laid plans of mice and men go oft astray?

Anyway, belief!

That our own Brash Elizalde and the rest of the boys in the press box would have to grapple with the unforeseen.

Heaven forbid!

That factor, turns the tables on Manny, because Barrera might be very well aware of Marco Antonio's turns. You expected the unexpected. How you have to deal with the unexpected.

Time. After his convincing win over Barrera that night in the Mandalay four years ago. Pacquiao has made endless boxing history—defeat fighters, including Erik Morales, Hector Marquez and Oscar Larios.

But Barrera is no pushover, at least not yet. After a loss to Juan Manuel Marquez, Barrera has retreated from his defeat to three gains by beating Paulie Ayala, Morales and Shelly Juarez twice. Besides Manny has trouble with Juarez' punches. That Barrera has positive and Pacquiao's no one will be known as Saturday night's 130-pound rematch.

What's also more troubling to Pacquiao claim his foe's secret plan is his many distractions. He lost a political campaign and tons of money in the process. Where now is the

COMMENTARY

glory of boxing, he is under the klieg lights as a movie and television star, calling with the panelists of intrigue—as hiding as alleged extremists of Batasan under cloaks.

Besides, his attention as the "national fist" distracts him as Barrera's concern about valiant entertaining adulation while training to hone to the fight.

Which brings me to at least with all a matter who acknowledges that Pacquiao is his country's tainted treasure.

But then the bold guy also says a treasure does not have to be PACQUIAO's but, Heaven forbid!

Sports post. The newly elected brass of the Games-GMA Association are calling on members to stay open as call for more contributions to the Go get up's scholarship fund. The fund helps deserving high school and college athletes in Games-Agoo Area participate in their Medallo Olimpiko—as he Wayo and Bob Arum agreed that Pacquiao will be more than ready for any Barrera surprise, but both seemed against an overconfident Pacman stepping into the ring against the gunsled Mexican veteran.

"Pacman has remarkable speed, power and stamina," Jo La Ibara said. "He has the sport. He has everything to win in this fight, but he also has everything to lose. Barrera has shown he is great when the odds are stacked against him."

"I am no Mexico winning this one," said Top Rank's Arum, who is representing the fight with Oscar De La Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions. "He enjoys a tremendous physical edge. Barrera, however, fights like a tiger when against the will. He is just great."

Pacquiao is expected to get an inspirational lift with the arrival of wife Jinkee here Monday. With a report from Sabrina Laguardia

Pacman on threat: I love surprises

By Recah Trinidad

LAS VEGAS—IT DIDN'T TAKE long for word to reach Manny Pacquiao that Marco Antonio Barrera plans a "surprise" that will "shock the Philippines" in their coming rematch at the Mandalay Bay.

It didn't take long, too, for the Filipino superstar to belittle the claim.

"He has a surprise?" Pacquiao said after the media presentation by both fighters at the site of the fight. A beat later, "We used to use surprises.

"He made an effort?" he added. "Sino ba ang hindi nagsabi niyan? Todo entrenas ako sa isang re (Who hasn't made an effort? I've sacrificed everything just for this fight)."

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SPORTSWATCH

Religon staghest up

THE OFFICIAL LEGEA DERBY OF PHILIPPINE GOLFERS' AMATEUR CUP 4 a.m. today with more than 100 matches on tap. The winners stand to receive a guaranteed total of P300,000 and up by Sunt Philly Cagas, Ricky Davis, PGMA, Tour three-month champion Wilfredo Go, Arnel Lagarenta and Jeff Warren head today's competitors. Also in the list are Terry Santos, Ildefonso Ortuoste, Ariel Bautista, Rafael Reyes, Ricky Velasco, Pol Ocampo, Doug Lacson, Art de Castro, Daniel Lhuillier, Glen Tee, Jo Bonifacio, Oscar Pantoja and Gaban Rabadon. For inquiries, call 404-2271, 0919-6181 and 0917-5897.

LGBA 2nd leg today

TOP MATCH STALL FIGHT IN RETURNS TO THE LUCKY SPORTS LEGAZPI Today beginning 10 a.m. via the second leg of the Luzon Interscreek Bowlers Association (LGBA) Hong Kee by series. Mayor Cris Albert-o of Catanduanes and former Legaspi of Batangas topped the first leg recently and lead the LGBA Carnaval Crusader of the Year race with seven points each. Meanwhile, Metro Manila contenders may join the second leg eliminations at Avenida Guinsaugon on Oct. 9 and 11. For details, call 0920.5003.680.

Men 1—(1) Ito the Future (4, Bob's Hardware) 24, (2) Lo-ne's Pride (2).

Men 2—(1) Tito—Bankrupt (4), Machinesse (2), Queen of Hats (1), Play It Again (1).

Men 3—(1) Tito—Ashley's Royal (7), Steel Muscle (6), PAGCOR-ians, Magic Star (2), Bowie (1), Real Black (1).

Men 4—(1) Tito—Assignment (7), Tato Cannon (5), Ito Lemon (2), Mr. Bakery (1).

Men 5—(1) Tito—Bulldog Gilbert (2), Sword of Damocles (8), Play To Win (1), Liberty Bell (6), Lucky Jack (4).

Men 7—(1) Ito—Bob's (8), Bob's (2), Mister Bowl (10), Four Babes (7), Miller Time (10), Four Babes (7), Miss Behave Bowlers (4).

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BY TOP CHOICE

Benitez ready for World Cup

BENITEZ: Big boost for

SOLIMANTES JAN BENITEZ, VENICE John Fadri and Frances Reyes of Jet Racing Team gear up for their upcoming stint in the country's representatives in the 2005 ROK World Cup set Oct. 11-14 at the South Gimhi Karting Track in Lonato, Italy.

Benitez, a Grade 7 student of Xavier School, earned the right as the Philippine's No. 1 bet for the ROK drama course by virtue of his solo leadership in the ROK Junior division of the ongoing 2005 Shell Helix Karting Super Series.

Sixth got his shot being the solo leader in the ROK Junior division of the 2005 Asian Karting Open Championship. Reyes will be competing in the Mini ROK division.

As part of the 80 Karting Team, Benitez and Sixto got free bowls, entry fees and airline tickets for the event.

"It's a big honor for me to represent the country and I'm very excited about this race," said Benitez.

Jet Racing head coach Elmer Cayco said Benitez has strong chances against the champions of Asia and the best in the world.

MLTC, V. Verde top Home and Away elims

PCA's Charlie Hui returns a shot while Mike Ilo looks on during their quarterfinal against Celebrity Sports Club's Jerry Gabriel and Manny Ramos in the men's 35-and-above division. Hui and Ilo won, 6-3.

BY TOP CHOICE

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Court finds NBA great Thomas guilty

NEW YORK—NEW YORK JURORS COACH Isiah Thomas sexually harassed a female executive of the basketball team, a jury decided on Tuesday, and it awarded her $11.6 million in punitive damages from team owner Madison Square Garden and its chairman James Dolan.

The seven-person federal jury sided that Anucha Browne Sanders, former marketing executive for the NBA team, was wrongly fired in retaliation for her complaint of sexual harassment.

"When I did here, I did for every working women in America," Browne Sanders told reporters outside the courtroom after the jury's verdict deliberated.

Browne Sanders, 44, was fired in February 2006 from her $200,000-a-year job as Knicks vice president, an action she said was in response to her sexual harassment complaint against Thomas.

She had accused Thomas of making unwanted advances toward her and subjecting her to verbal insults, which she said began in 2004 after he joined the team as head coach. She had asked the court for $40 million in damages.

Thomas insisted afterward that he was innocent and vowed to appeal the verdict.

"I still appeal this and I remain confident in the men that I am, and what I stand for, and the family that I have," he said.

The innocent I'm very innocent. And I did not do the things that she accused me in the courtroom of doing."

Jurors were not able to decide whether Thomas should pay Browne Sanders damages, so a separate trial will soon be scheduled by US District Court Judge Gerard Lynch.

Under the contract, the Garden, which is owned by Cablevision Systems Corp., must pay $8.8 million and Dolan must pay $3 million.

The Garden and Dolan had countered that Browne Sanders was fired because she was insubordinate and for interfering with the investigation of her harassment complaint.

Cablevision officials for Cablevision were not immediately available for comment.

The trial and its outcome were the latest black eyes for a Knicks organization that has struggled competitively in recent years.

Thomas steered the Knicks to a 33-49 record last season in his first year as coach after being ordered by Dolan to take over from coach Larry Brown.

Brown, who had been signed by Thomas to a five-year $50 million contract to pilot the Knicks, posted a 23-59 record in his three seasons before being fired.

THOMAS: I'm innocent

Keon offers help for national games' revival

By Jane Navarro

SHELVED FOR A DECADE, THE FESTIVAL OF the Philippine National Games took a positive turn when the Philippine Sports Commission brought in a valuable sports figure into the scene.

Former Ateneo Ateneo chief Michael Keon agreed yesterday to help the PSC in its grassroots programs and offered to host the 1993 in Cebu from next summer.

Keon, who the Bacon Phoenix Governor said he would seek the support of the League of Governors in serving the PSC, which last held in 1997 when the multi-sport event was hosted by Cebu City.

"I told them (PSC officials) I'm more than willing to help this national sport, development programs particularly the revival of the Philippine National Games," said Keon, who joined PSC chairman Butch Ramirez and commissioners Melba Garcia and Jose Almeda a visit yesterday.

KEON

Keon's commitment could also help boost the implementation of Executive Order 651, the presidential directive designed to strengthen the country's grassroots development program.

RAMIREZ asked to lay down the foundations of the government's grassroots program by focusing on a handful of selected disciplines considered as medal-potential sports such as boxing, taekwondo, chess and wushu.

"The PSC is a lead government unit, akin to Ateneo the League of Governors would be interested since many of them are really sports-minded," said the nephew of the late octogenian President Ferdinand Marcos.

Ramirez said Keon has also agreed to host a four-day coaches' seminar and workshop with the objective of strengthening coaching at the grassroots level. Keon said a total of 90 young coaches will participate in the seminar.

Polymasters edge Mighty Filter Kings

THE 2007 MBT GOpeddi League got off hot as Polymasters of Alex Mallisi and Jaime Ordiz beat the Mighty Filter Kings in double overtime 88-84, Monday at the RTS gym in Mandaluyong.

For two [illegible] of the four-day Brixton Crossover heroes with Ronnie Zuppan and Ariel Rotea in leading the Filter Kings, who missed crucial free throws that could have reversed the outcome.

Mighty Filter's Dirk Tarriela and the game-tier first overtime by knocking in a bucket-beating jumper while Randy Chua gave the Kings another lease on life with another tough basket that the match.

Unlike the Poly-masters, GLP 168 had an early lead winning Parties Tooling on Mercon Polycarpio, Ronnel Flor, Fred Cagali and Gabor Cruz combined for 32 points en route to a 100-77 win.

Other opening day winners were the GI Hardcased Ready Lopez, which combined Convergys, 121-98; Jet Cellphone of Scott Go, which included PNC Couriers of sportsman Alex Wong, 74-66. Brought Lonely which tripped MBT-Mines Pride, 87-80; and PAP Masters, which topped Forest Balance, 79-67.

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

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CHINA SCS ENGINEERING PHILS. CORPORATION		Accountant
LAUNCH INTERNATIONAL MOBILE CORP.		Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer
LAUNCH INTERNATIONAL MOBILE CORP.		Chief Operating Officer
PGH GENERAL MERCHANDISE INC.		Sales Manager
PGH GENERAL MERCHANDISE INC.		Marketing Manager
ASAHI STEEL/MITSUI MARUI CORPORATION		Project Manager
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If you have any information/evidence to the above-mentioned application please communicate with the Regional Director.

EDMUNDO C. ARGUELLES
OIC Regional Director

ALBERT Pidilla connects with a jab to Harry Tañamor's head on the way to scoring a huge upset.

SPORTS

Race for last Milo slots quickens; student listing up

Navyman upsets Tañamor

By Dennis U. Erao

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—TWO-TIME Olympian Harry Tañamor became the second big name to fall in the 2007 Smart National Boxing Open Championships as he lost a thriller of a bout to Narcisuan fellow Pidilla Tuesday night here.

Tañamor, a veteran of the 2000 Sydney and 2004 Athens Olympics, lost to Pidilla in the third and fourth rounds and took a stinging 2-1 setback against the Navyman.

"I really lost [in the] first round," said Pidilla after the win at the Misamis Oriental provincial capitol.

A day earlier, Orlando Tarcauan Jr. of Angeles City shocked Doha Asian Games gold medalist Jeam Tipon, 30-24, in their featherweight clash.

The 19-year-old Tarcauan is a member of the national training pool.

Tañamor, however, knocked aside his defeat, saying he was not in top shape.

"I'm sure pati bully-nasorrend also sumpening in the Czech republic," stressed Tañamor, back-to-back gold medalist in the 2003 and 2004 Southeast Asian Games.

National coach Dr. Gaspi said Tañamor lacked focus against Pidilla, who is also a member of the national training pool.

"I think Harry's mind was wondering during the match," said Gaspi. "Nevertheless, Pidilla's win serves as a warning to our nationals that they need to be in top shape always."

The rest of the favorites stamped their class over their respective rivals, with Philippine strongly Godfrey Castro and Gerlie Escudero, and Philippine Navy's Jeepot Ladico winning convincingly.

Castro, an Army corporal, prevailed over a hard-fighting Jay-R Quiero of Eheric Boxing Team, 8-5, in advance to the semifinals.

Escudero, on the other hand, beat Roberto Pilo Del Rosario of Philippine Navy-Sbga-City-Cebu referee stopped contest Overlapped with 1:42 left in round one, while Ladico, also member in the 2005 Manila SEAG, also overdosed hometown's bet Edmino Tapeino of Misamis Oriental to reach the quarterfinals.

MEET YOUR MATCH.

THE 21ST NATIONAL MILO Marathon is on to its final stretch.

With five qualifying races left in the season, the country's biggest and longest running foot race is now gearing up for its grand finale on May 18 at the Quirino Grandstand in Manila.

While the centerpiece event of the finals is the 42.195-kilometer marathon where the best long-distance runners from the 20 cities, provinces and regions will battle for the top prize of P75,000, most of the participants and enthusiasts will just do the 10, 5K and 10K side events.

National race organizers have also announced that registration is now open for students and schools. Those interested may call 725-9687 for further information.

Registration for participating schools will end on Oct. 18, 2007.

Meanwhile the open leaping begins at the ground floor of the Shoppesat Bluebird Plaza Bldg., 31 Annapolis St. San Juan.

Entry fees are P80 for the 2K kiddies run; P100 for the 5K individual entry; P80 for students with 16 or more entries in the 5K run; and P100 for the 10K run—all entries must be accompanied by a 200 gram Milo label.

Participants in the 16 run should be in to 12 years old, 5K and 10K run should be 13-years-old and above. Photocopy of birth certificate is required for those participating in the 5K run and must be personally submitted by their parent or guardian.

DUENAS/STA

The 42K division, which will be participated in by the likes of Ismael Khan the Barcelona, is only for the 22K provincial qualifiers and 16K Metro Manila qualifiers.

The 10K champion wins P5,000; the 5K winners pin P2,500; and the 5K Kiddies age-group top finishers get P1,500 each.

In all, over P500,000 is at stake in the grand finals of the 2007 Milo Marathon held to partnership with Bayview Park Hotel, Adidas and the Tourism departments.

Whichever way, it's a Pumaren win

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

THE UAAP BEST-OF-THREE championship series between La Salle, coached by Franz Pumaren, and UE, coached by Dindo Pumaren, was surprisingly not to Pio Pumaren's consternation when I called him for a short interview yesterday.

"I haven't been in the dorm for a change for a long time now." He replied when I asked him how he was feeling the Wednesday which was the eve of Game One of the series.

But he was feeling OK, he assured me. His blood cups was under control, thanks to regular exercise and the proper diet, and he found no need to check with the doctor.

***

Of course I was glad to know that the father of championship contenders Dindo and Franz was in fine health. But what I was really wanting to ask was how it felt to be in the shoes (having two sons fighting for a championship) title.

Was he favoring anybody? Is he giving tips on how to win over the other?

Pio looked beatific. He was in very high spirits. For him the UAAP was a cross Pumaren versus Pumaren equals Pumarens. It was a win-win situation.

Pio said there was absolutely no stress or pressure in watching that championship because the Pumarens will go home happy whichever way the wind blows.

***

But while he was impartial, or tried hard not to be, Pio admitted that Dindo, his youngest, needed the title—his first ever—more than Franz, who has five medal under his belt, including a "four-peat" with the Archers.

"Dindo has not yet won a championship yet," said Pio, a UE graduate whose history with the Warriors dates back to the '50s when the legendary Delfin Dalupan was still coach and the University of the East was still owned by the Dalupan family.

Pio was part of the Dalupan-coached champion UE teams. Years later he would again be part of another UE champion squad, this time as its coach.

***

"Franz will be sitting behind the La Salle bench while Papa will be coaching for Dindo and his alma mater in the UE area. For this UAAP series, the Pumarens family will be divided," said Maricog Bertrik, who, as official UE consultant, will be rallying behind youngest brother Dindo.

Bertrik, who coaches Ish-76 Tent in the PBL, has helped hone the Warriors into the team it is now.

"I think both Franz and I want to finish the series right away for it will be tough because the La Salle players have the championship experience and Franz has the coach record," said Dindo.

According to Mang Pito, for the next few days, Dindo and Franz will forget their brothers, going and taking on quarters in the title series.

"Dalit gold mines."

Karting super series 7th leg slated Sunday

THE 2007 SMELL HELIX KART RACE Super Series stages its seventh and penultimate leg this Sunday at the Boondock Kart Track, Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Complex in Pasay City.

Novocaine Mohani Mercado aims to follow up his big victories in Cebu as he hopes to prevail over defending champion Mathew Gaudiosh of Alexandra Racing and Clavet Cleak of Bird Motorsports in the premiere Formula 125 Invicta Open.

Joining them in the combined race are Bird Motorsport's Bobby Dominguez and Alessandra Racing's Alessandra Madrigal and Maica Angeles and Ken Silvestre.

Also hoping for a repeat win is Oliver Aquino of Alessandra Racing in the Formula St. Expert Class.

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PUBLIC FOR BETTER VALUES

BSP says peso to remain strong vs dollar

LENOVO'S Mike Lebo carries reinvents IT and data experience, having evolved to various technology companies in the US, Australia, China and Singapore, during the 6th MAP International CEO Conference at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel in Makati City.

Urges exporters to hedge against forex risks

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL ng Pilipinas yesterday said the peso would remain strong against the dollar in the near term, whether exporters like it or not, but disadvantaged sectors could tap a wide array of hedging tools to reduce their foreign exchange risks.

"The peso is expected to remain firm for the rest of the year on the back of remittance dollar inflows from overseas Filipino contractors, portfolio and foreign direct investments and export receipts," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said in a forum with reporters here yesterday.

Guinigundo said the upward trend continues for the rest of the year despite prices from rising oil prices and the credit crunch in the United States or despite the BSP's occasional interventions in the spot foreign exchange market.

The peso closed at 46.14 to a dollar yesterday from Tuesday's 44.915. Traders suspected that BSP intervention prevented the local currency's further appreciation in the last few days.

"A strong peso is not the BSP's policy. Our policy has always been and will continue to be for a market-determined exchange rate, with occasional steps for official action on our part to smoothen excessive volatility in the exchange rate, and this can do whether the rate is going up or going down," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in the same forum.

Tetangco said the volatility in asset prices, especially in the form of swings in foreign investments, could adversely affect the operations and render the investment plans of both public and private sectors highly disadvantaged.

"Hedging could, therefore, serve as a form of insurance to help businesses endure this type of risks so businesses could plan better and reduce volatility in

BSP SEE BIZ

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Lenovo to test market sub-$200 PC in RP

By Dexter L. Lacson

COMPUTER MAKER LENOVO is set to test-break an important price barrier in the country as it prepares to introduce a personal computer aimed at entry-level users, a ranking official of the company said.

In a press briefing, Lenovo's president for Asia Pacific and Japan David B. Miller said the company would bring to the Philippines—on a test market basis—a PC priced below $300 per unit. (Less than P13,000 at current exchange rates.)

He said this would be done "within the year."

Lenovo, one of the world's largest personal computer makers in the wake of the highly successful Thinkpad series of laptops which it acquired from industry giant IBM more than two years ago.

The firm has been aggressively expanding its presence worldwide, including the Philippines where it deals with clients on both the retail and wholesale fronts.

Miller said the sub-$300 PC would be tailored with the basic functionality required by everyday computer users.

The company is successfully selling a similar unit in the Chinese market for $390, he said.

Apart from China, he pointed out that such products are popular as rapidly growing economies like India where the demand for "competitively priced" PCs and laptops is growing.

Despite this move, at the lower end of the market spectrum, the official said Lenovo would continue to emphasize its presence at "value-to-point" of the computer market.

Miller said the brand inherited by the PCs and laptops would continue to grow in the foreseeable future, but noted that growth would be skewed toward either end of the price range, depending on the level of economic development of any particular market.

In some markets, he noted that sales of less-priced computers were growing at a rapid pace, while sales of high-end laptops were actually contracting. The reverse is true, however, for more developed markets where buyers put a premium on having the latest technology.

Miller said that Lenovo continued to adapt its products to the needs of its clients in the markets it serves.

This includes extending to using the Thinkpad laptop line using the most advanced technology yet even to designing the IBM label focus to consumers.

"Our theme felt it was evolution from," he said, explaining the company's move to dissociate itself from the IBM brand.

Despite being initially identified with China, the Lenovo official said the company was now more diversified in its operations and manufacturing base.

Stocks nearing all-time high, gain another 2.52%

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

STOCK PRICES ROSE TO THEIR highest in nearly three months, buoyed by the prospect of a new outright round cut in the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' key interest rate, some brokers said.

The benchmark stock market index Climbed with its all-time high of 3,791.42 set last July 9, as the local bourse played catch-up with the rest of the Asian markets that were hitting record levels.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) rose sharply by 93.43 points or 2.52 percent to close at 3,790.82, its highest level since July 13 when it reached its 3,796.82. The PSEi hit an intraday high of 3,793.45.

"It seems that the market is anticipating a local rate cut since the property stocks were the first to move," a broker said.

Total value of traded stocks reached P7.8 billion with 91 gainers against 66 losers.

Despite the market's growing confidence that the Bangko Sentral will slash key interest rates by as much as 25 basis points at its policy meeting today, certain Bangko Sentral officials have reportedly expressed concern over high oil and food prices.

Edgar Saavedra, head of research at AB Capital Investment, said the local bourse may take its cue from markets, which were hitting record levels. This was in stark contrast to the US market, which was down despite its strength.

"That's the irony of it all. All of a sudden, emerging markets are outperforming because the US economy is slowing down," Saavedra said.

Market leaders Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (TLEX) and Ayala Corp. rounded into record highs.

TLEX, the country's biggest company by market value, jumped P 3.00 to P3,940 after rounding a record high of P3,965 during the day.

"A lot of investment houses are seeing good earnings prospects for TLEX. The rally is really driven by its strong fundamentals. And this also shows the overall positive outlook for the Philippine market," said Asiro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings.

Top conglomerate Ayala Corp. reached an all-time high of P430 on its cascade bid or closing at P405, up P25 from the previous session.

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING PUBLIC WORKS BAN AND RELEASE, DISBURSEMENT AND EXPENDITURES OF PUBLIC FUNDS IN CONNECTION WITH THE OCTOBER 29, 2007 SYNCHRONIZED BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS

Benjamin S. Abalos, Sr. — Chairman (Resigned)
Resurreccion Z. Borra — Commissioner
Florentino A. Tuason, Jr. — Commissioner
Romeo A. Brawner — Commissioner
Rene V. Sarmiento — Commissioner
Nicodemo T. Ferrer — Commissioner

Promulgated 02 October 2007

RESOLUTION NO. 8309

WHEREAS, Sec. 3 of Republic Act No. 6679 prohibits the construction or maintenance of provincial, city, municipal and barangay-funded roads and bridges for a period of ten (10) days immediately preceding the date of elections;

NOW, therefore, the Commission on Elections, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, and other election laws, has **RESOLVED** as it hereby **RESOLVES,** to promulgate, the following rules and regulations to enforce the aforementioned provision of law:

SECTION 1. Prohibition against construction or maintenance of provincial, city, municipal and barangay-funded roads and bridges. – Effective October 19, 2007 to October 28, 2007, the construction or maintenance of provincial, city, municipal and barangay-funded roads and bridges shall be prohibited. The provisions of Section 261, paragraph (v) and (w) of the Omnibus Election Code to the contrary notwithstanding.

SEC. 2. Submission to the Commission of Lists of Authorized Public Works Projects. – On or before October 11, 2007, the provincial governors, city/municipal mayors and punong barangays in relation to provincial, city/municipal and barangay public works as the case may be, shall submit to the Commission in Manila thru the provincial election supervisor/election officers concerned, certified lists of all on-going construction or maintenance of provincial, city/municipal and barangay-funded roads and bridges.

SEC. 3. Immediate payment of laborers required. – Any laborer who may have worked on the construction and maintenance of provincial, city/municipal and barangay-funded roads and bridges which have to be suspended pursuant to the ten (10) day ban shall be paid immediately his complete earned wage upon the suspension of said projects. In no case shall the earned wage or any portion thereof be retained to be paid only within five days before or on the day of the election.

SEC. 4. Injunction. – The Department of Budget and Management and the Commission on Audit, including all its field offices, are hereby enjoined not to release or authorize the release of any appropriation, or to pass in audit payments or expenditures of public funds that may directly or indirectly be used in violation of the prohibitions contained in Section 3, of RA 6679.

All field offices of the Commission, including those of its deputized agencies and citizens' arm, are directed to monitor compliance with the requirements under Sec. 2 hereof by the local executive officers in their respective jurisdictions and submit immediately to the Commission a written report on any violation of said provisions.

SEC. 5. Penalty. – Any violation of the prohibitions under this Resolution shall, consistent with Sections 261 and 263 of the Omnibus Election Code, constitute an election offense and shall be punishable by imprisonment of not less than one year but not more than six years, among other penalties provided for by law.

SEC. 6. Effectivity. – This Resolution shall take effect on the seventh (7th) day after its publication in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

SEC. 7. Dissemination. – The Education and Information Department shall cause the publication of this Resolution in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation, and shall furnish the Executive Secretary, the Chairman of the Commission on Audit, heads of all departments, and national offices, provincial governors, city/municipal mayors and punong barangays and other agencies of the government, including government-owned or controlled corporations, all registered political parties, the citizens' arm and all field offices of the Commission, copies hereof.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS, SR.
Chairman

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA — Commissioner
FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR. — Commissioner
ROMEO A. BRAWNER — Commissioner
RENE V. SARMIENTO — Commissioner
NICODEMO T. FERRER — Commissioner

(Published in Manila Bulletin and Philippine Star, October 4, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

RULES AND REGULATIONS ON THE LIQUOR BAN IN CONNECTION WITH THE OCTOBER 29, 2007 SYNCHRONIZED BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS

Benjamin S. Abalos, Sr. — Chairman (Resigned)
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Romeo A. Brawner — Commissioner
Rene V. Sarmiento — Commissioner
Nicodemo T. Ferrer — Commissioner

Promulgated 02 October 2007

RESOLUTION NO. 8310

WHEREAS, the Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines provides:

"**Sec. 261. Prohibited Acts.** – The following shall be guilty of an election offense:

* * * * * * * * *

"(dd) It is [sic] for any person who sells, furnishes, offers, buys, serves or takes intoxicating liquor on the days fixed by law for the registration of voters in the polling places, or on the day before the election or on election day. Provided, that hotels and other establishments duly certified by the Department of Tourism as tourist oriented and habitually in the business of catering to foreign tourists may be exempted for justifiable reasons upon prior authority of the Commission: *Provided, further,* That foreign tourists taking intoxicating liquor in said authorized hotels or establishments are segregated from the prohibition of this sub-paragraph.

WHEREAS, violation of said prohibited acts shall be punishable with imprisonment of not less than one year but not more than six years and shall not be subject to probation, and in addition, the guilty party shall suffer disqualification to hold public office and deprivation of the right of suffrage.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Commission on Elections (Commission), pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, and other election laws, has **RESOLVED,** as it hereby **RESOLVES,** to promulgate the following implementing rules and regulations:

SECTION 1. Prohibited Acts. – It shall be unlawful for any person, including owners and managers of hotels and other establishments in said "tourist" cities duly same, or take possession of liquor in the Philippines.

SEC. 2. Prohibited Period. – The liquor ban shall be in force and effect on October 28, 2007, the day before the election and on October 29, 2007, the day of the election.

SEC. 3. Exemption. – Hotels and other establishments duly certified by the Department of Tourism as tourist-oriented and habitually in the business of catering to foreign tourists may be exempted for justifiable reasons from the liquor ban, **PROVIDED** they secure prior written authority from the Commission as provided for in Section 4 hereof.

Only foreign tourists taking intoxicating liquor in said authorized hotels or establishments are exempted from the prohibition.

SEC. 4. Where to apply for and secure exemption. – Applications for exemption together with supporting documents, shall be filed with, and duly acted upon by the following:

a. The Regional Election Director of the NCR, in cases of hotels and other establishments located in the National Capital Region;

b. The Provincial Election Supervisors, with respect to hotels & other establishments located in their municipalities within their respective provinces; and

c. The City Election Officers, with respect to hotels & other establishments located within their respective cities/districts.

SEC. 5. Conditions for the grant of exemption. – Exemption may be granted only upon compliance with and submission of the following:

a.) A request/petition/application for exemption which should be under oath and which shall contain a statement that the hotels/establishment operators/ owners have not been convicted for an election offense;

b.) A certification by the Department of Tourism that the requesting hotel or establishment:

1. is tourist-oriented and is habitually in the business of catering to foreign tourists;
2. is currently licensed to do business; and
3. has complied with the required standards imposed by the government or any of its agencies or instrumentalities.

SEC. 6. Revocation of exemption. – The exemption granted may be revoked or withdrawn by the Commission upon proper notice and hearing, motu proprio or upon complaint of any interested party, after it has been established that the exemption was made on misrepresentation or false statement or that the requesting party or applicant has committed any major violation of the election laws, rules and regulations or of the Implementing Rules and Regulations issued by the Department of Tourism, Association of Hotels and Restaurants, Regional Election Directors (REDs), Provincial Election Supervisors (PESs), Election Officers (EOs), and the COMELEC Election Law Enforcement Team (ELET), if any, which will be formed by the Commission in specific areas, shall implement this Resolution.

SEC. 7. Effectivity. – This Resolution shall take effect on the seventh (7th) day after its publication in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

SEC. 8. Dissemination. – The Education and Information Department shall cause the publication of this Resolution in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation and shall furnish the Executive Secretary, the Chairman of the Commission on Audit, heads of all departments, and national offices, provincial governors, city/municipal mayors and punong barangays and other agencies of the government, including government-owned or controlled corporations, all registered political parties, the citizens' arm and all field offices of the Commission, copies hereof.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS, SR.
Chairman

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RENE V. SARMIENTO — Commissioner
NICODEMO T. FERRER — Commissioner

(Published in Manila Bulletin and Philippine Star, October 4, 2007)

Who's afraid of education hi-tech tools?

BREAKTIME
Conrado S. Manual Jr.

ANY DAY THE LYRES IS GOOD... from project of the Department of Education "suspended indefinitely?"

The DepEd planned to use satellite communications to link up all public schools in the country to electronic education.

Meaning, the fine sales of the action stars in the Senate, all of our 38,000 public schools would get the same high quality lessons, every day, from the best and brightest in the public school system.

The project would use technology to save our education system, which our neighbors have been using for more than 10 years now. Thailand by tomorrow!

Here in the Philippines, the satellite system would have allowed a teacher at the Philippine Science High School who has doctorate degree in Physics to give a lecture 20 minutes a day to all the physics students in all public schools in the country.

His amount of Congressional budget for education are much else kind of quality instruction.

Replace the satellite interconnection of the schools, that P6.3 billion budget would be for 40 students in the home classroom. In short, what a waste!

But, based on surveys after surveys, and tests after tests, our education system was already proven to be deteriorating. Some say Congress should also pay its responsibility in the ZTE contract.

If we really need the cyber education project, why such it... well, suspended indefinitely?

The guys here in my bureau suspect that the project could have died from some backlash from the ping-ton over the ARRO project.

* * *

Dodot NHAP. I hear the ZTE contract was hindered by a top figure in the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry or the PCCI, I, known as Mister "E". The guy is known to have close contacts with important people in China.

Word from our sources is the results last a time that some Mister "E" made a lot of money by brokering a deal for the piers, involving the clustering of import shipments.

It is not likely then that, as the brokers he also made a bundle in other government concerns, such as that between the DOTC and the ZTE.

* * *

ANYWAY, something is awfully wrong in the way the administration is reacting to the ZTE deal, particularly the scrapping of the cyber education project.

If the project has flaws, the answer is to correct them. If some people are making money out of it, the solution is simply to shoot them.

Just remember that, last year, out of the 45 countries that volunteered their education systems to be rated, the Philippines placed next to bottom in mathematics and sciences.

For us, there is nothing cool.

* * *

IN THE past 11 years, the ABS-CBN foundation, together with the Department of Education, has been producing education shows for TV. Its observatory school subjects such as mathematics, science and English. They were just 29-minute shows, shown at almost 6,000 Philippine public schools.

Recently the foundation demonstrated the results of these TV education shows. It sent two schools in a validation test, accepting one to the experimental school that does not use the shows, and the other to the control school that did not use the program.

As expected the students in the experimental schools got significantly higher grades in the tests than those in the control school.

In science subjects, moreover, the grades of the students in the experimental schools increased by 8 percentage points, after three months of educational TV shows.

Who said that TV education, using either satellite feed or canned shows, is discouraging in the students? This is best. Let's do it!

* * *

ARROYO chief of budget to meet the needs of the public school system, the DepEd submitted the adopt-a-school program.

It involves the installation for private entities that fund various school needs such as classrooms, computers and textbooks.

The launch was in September last year. Since then, the program generated some P2 billion worth of contributions for about 22,000 public schools nationwide.

It barely touched the surface, unfortunately even with some P4.5 billion worth of pledges by the private sector for this year.

Among the donors are Intel Manufacturers Philippines, Coca-Cola Foundation, Microsoft, ABS-CBN Foundation, Mega-merchi, McDonald's, Ayala Foundation, Philippine College of Physicians (PCP) and the Philippine Medical Association (PMA).

* * *

EDSA on the basis activity in the corporate stock market. GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia wants the pension fund to spearhead the creation of a Philippine bond fund.

My information is that the GSIS is receiving P15-P30 billion of its premiums to buy up government bonds issues that the Philippine Stock Exchange may in its Philippine stock index, or the Phisix.

Under Garcia's plan, the GSIS will then let the asset Philippine peso government securities.

His effect: The Philippine coffers investors a way to invest in all the index issues, without necessary pursuing the issues of each index to live.

Through the Phisix bond, you can still put your money in Philippine stocks, if you are reassured that the market is on a general uptrend, with much less money than if you are to do it alone.

* * *

IRON THE GSIS already has the mutual fund called Kinabukasan Fund that posted a 43 percent ROI last year.

Compare that with the 1 percent yearly interest rate on savings deposits, or even the 4 percent rate on time deposits, and you will understand why Garcia is going before the Phisix bond.

BSP says peso ... From page B1

from each from" he said.

Yesterday's forum focused on hedging against exchange rate fluctuations through the use of derivatives, or financial products whose worth are based on the values of underlying economic indicators.

"No exposure, for instance, by entering into a forward contract, could reduce the volatility of his cash flow by locking in at an agreed exchange rate the conversion of proceeds of his future export earnings," Tetangco said.

But the BSP chief stressed that the competitiveness of

Gokongwei firm acquires Iloilo sugar mill

URC to become RP's 2nd largest sugar mill, refiner

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

UNIVERSAL ROBINA CORP., the snack food and beverage company of the Gokongweis, yesterday said it had bought the assets for its first sugar mill in Iloilo City's Barotac Viejo.

The acquisition makes URC the country's second largest sugar milling company and its Victorias Milling Corp.

Covered by the deal were Pasu's two sugar mills with a combined capacity of 8,000 tons per day. Pasu, which is the largest sugar producer in Panay, is owned by the Gonzing family of Iloilo.

"This purchase, together with the expansion of our Investor's mills and refinery, will catapult URC to become the country's second largest sugar mill and refiner," URC president Lance Y. Gokongwei told in a statement.

URC operates sugar mills and refineries in Cagayan Valley in Luzon (Cagayan Robina Sugar Milling Corp.), Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental (Southern Negros Development Corp.), and Bacolod, Negros Occidental (Universal Robina Milling Corp.).

These plants have a combined milling capacity of 17,000 tons of cane per day and a total refining capacity of 17,000 of 50-kilogram bags per day.

In its fiscal year 2006, URC produced about 360,000 metric tons of raw sugar and 1.7 million 50-kg bags of refined sugar.

URC is currently increasing Investor's milling capacity by 4,000 tons of cane per day. This will be completed this month. It recently commissioned a new refinery in Investor to raise its refining capacity by 15,000 50-kg bags per day.

URC is one of the largest branded food companies in the Philippines. It owns into sugar-milling and refining to supplement its food and beverage manufacturing business.

It is a subsidiary of JG Summit Holdings Inc., one of the country's most diversified conglomerates with businesses in property development, telecom, air transport, petrochemicals and financial services.

Ortigas firm to build ₱2-B KPO campus

By Rax T. Olalia-Arao

ORTIGAS AND COMPANY LI building a P2-billion KPO campus and P12-billion residential complex in the Ortigas area to take advantage of the ICT and property boom, CEO Ben Dalton said at the sidelines of the Management Association of the Philippines (CEO roundtable.

Dalton said the KPO-cu knowledge process outsourcing campus would be built across Time Jacinto while the P12-billion residential complex will rise just off EDSA.

Three projects, he said, were expected to ensure enough tenants to include a retail component.

He said the company was heading the projects with interactively pre-sourced cash, adding, however, that it was open to seeking a joint venture arrangement with another group.

The projects are in line with the company's announcement last year that it was pursuing the redevelopment of the Ortigas area to create property values and enhance its status as a premiere business district of Metro Manila.

Dalton said there that the company had hired the services of the Pahlen and Associates to prepare a master plan to transform Ortigas Center into "transport-oriented, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use" business center.

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Item	Approved Budget	Bidding Fee
Lot 1 - Supply, Delivery, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Slot Machine Units	Three Million Pesos (Php 3,000,000.00)	One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php 1,500.00)
Lot 2 - Supply, Delivery, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Slot Machine Units	Two Million Pesos (Php 2,000,000.00)	One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00)

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	October 04, 2007 – October 22, 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	October 11, 2007 (2:00 pm)
3. Submission of Bids	October 22, 2007 (10 am)
4. Opening of Bids	October 22, 2007 (10:00 am onwards)

Petrolift raising ₱3.5B from share offer

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

OIL AND GAS trailer firm Petrolift Inc., said late Tuesday that it has filed an application with the corporation regulators to raise P3.5billion through a public offering.

In a statement, Petrolift said its application with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) established the sale of 407 million shares, consisting of 329.25 million new shares and 10.5 million existing shares.

The shares to be listed account for 25 to 35 percent of the total issued and outstanding capital stock of the company after the initial public offering.

BDO Capital and Investment Corp. has been tapped as the issue manager and lead underwriter for the planned IPO.

Proceeds from the offering will be used by the company to acquire trailer units, upgrade its existing fleet of trailers to double-ball, and purchase dry bulk carrier and heavy equipment for mining logistics.

Petrolift currently has the biggest number of double ball-compliant trailers in the country. The IPO would provide the company more flexibility to upgrade its existing fleet, as well as convert idle office portfolio and viable markets," Petrolift said in a statement.

Petrolift said its subsidiaries are engaged in the business of providing oil and gas trailer services, allied marine services, and logistics support for mining and other related industries. It is touted to be industry leader in the Philippine oil and gas trailer industry having answered to applying world-class standards to modernize the domestic trailer fleet.

Fisheries sector seen growing 8-10% in Q4 due to aquaculture

By Amy R. Remo

THE BUREAU OF FISHERIES and Aquatic Resources expects an 8-10 percent growth in the fisheries sector in the fourth quarter, due mainly to the sustained growth of the aquaculture industry.

BFAR Director Malcolm J. Sarmiento Jr. said in a briefing yesterday that the fourth quarter will be characterized by more harvests and production from the aquaculture subsector due to the Christmas season.

"Most operators target end-November to December to harvest tilapia, bangus and prawns due to the seasonal growth in demand," he explained.

Sarmiento said that in 2006, aquaculture accounted for 47 percent of total fisheries production.

This was a big jump from the sector's 15-percent contribution back in the '80s.

With the sustained growth of the subsector, Sarmiento said BFAR was expecting fisheries production to hit 4.6 million metric tons this year, and 5.3 million metric tons in 2008.

Andrea Instruments said it was possible for the industry to produce 1 million MT on the assumption that the government will allot an additional P170 million in its 2007 budget.

This is also based on the assumption that there would be no natural disasters or climate outbreaks.

Last year, fisheries production reached 4.4 million metric tons.

In 2003, the country ranked eighth in the world in terms of fisheries production.

"The additional budget will be used mainly for production enhancement and hatchery projects," Sarmiento said.

One of its programs is the establishment of more mariculture parks from the current 25, most of which are in the Visayas.

IMI to expand to Russia, Asia

By Elizabeth Sanchez Lacson

INTEGRATED MICROELECTRONICS Inc., the electronics subsidiary of Ayala Corp., is finalizing plans to expand in Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia.

IMI president Arthur Tan said on the sidelines of the Management Association of the Philippines International Conference yesterday that IMI was looking at either building a new manufacturing plant abroad or forming joint ventures in Russia and Vietnam.

"Vietnam is one of the countries in our longterm list because for cost product services," Tan said in a briefing.

IMI recently expanded its manufacturing capacity with a 12,500-square-foot facility in Shenzhen, its fifth place in China.

In the Philippines, IMI recently acquired 10,000 square meters of new space in the Laguna technology park.

Tan also said IMI was reviewing a plan to "tie by mergers [or] the company's shares on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Listing by introduction does not require a public offer since the company's shares are already widely held.

"We thought we'll do that this year, but we don't need to tap the capital market right now. But it would give synergy investors a vehicle to come in," Tan said.

IMI is eyeing revenues of over $400 million this year and is confident it will meet its target of $500 million in revenues next year.

Net income growth, however, is expected to slow down due to the strong peso.

IMI posted a 4-percent growth in revenues to $199 million in the first half but higher general and administrative expenses related to its integration projects from the acquisition of Speedy Tech, resulted in a 30-percent decline in net income during the period.

Speedy Tech has operations in China.

Forum Energy seeks investors for coal assets

By Abigail L. Ho

FORUM ENERGY PLC, THROUGH local arm Forum Energy Philippines Corp., is now in talks with prospective investors for its coal assets in Cebu.

In a statement posted on the company's official website, Forum chair Alan Henderson said the company was forever re-reserving its cash for the expected commencement of its geophysical survey and exploration contract (GSEC) 101 into a service contract rather than actively pursuing coal prospects.

"The prime activity in the coal contracts has been the execution of exploration activities following some unexpected cave results, which required confirmation of the geological model prior to further investment in order to secure the necessary returns. This has now been completed to satisfaction," he said.

"However, with the positive results on GSEC 101 and the determination to conserve capital to take advantage of a variable situation in the award of the service contract, the company is in the process of marketing the proven coal assets to more quickly capitalize on the resource and is in discussion with a number of interested parties," he added.

Forum subsidiary IGMC (BI) Ltd. has entered into a joint venture with Mono Oro Resources and Energy Inc. for the development of GSEC 101.

Under the agreement, Mono Oro will secure a 50-percent interest in GSEC 101.

Forum, meanwhile, holds two coal operating contracts.

According to the company, its Bukidnon-Negs (Central Cebu) and Dalaguete (South Cebu) coal areas have proven and probable coal reserves of 6.9 million tons.

The Central Cebu contract consists of two sets of two coal blocks spanning 4,000 hectares.

The South Cebu contract, on the other hand, is composed of two sets of two coal blocks covering almost 2,720 hectares.

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BUSINESS

Concerns weigh on rate decision

Regulator walking on tightrope

By Dante L. Lucas

AFTER THE US FEDERAL RESERVE surprised financial markets worldwide with a bigger-than-expected interest rate cut last month, local pundits spoke in one tenure of the belief that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) will move in the same direction.

In the ensuing days, the foreign exchange, bond and stock markets moved with the expectation that the central bank will cut its own overnight rates by at least a quarter of a percentage point.

What a difference one month can make.

As of yesterday, the number of financial market practitioners who believe that the BSP will choose not to adjust rates—once an insignificant minority opinion—had grown in number enough to challenge conventional wisdom.

For many people, the debate is esoteric. But the effect on the economy are profound.

"The decision of the central bank (today) will affect the economy up to 12 or 18 months into the future," said ING Bank's chief investment officer Paul Joseph Cuenia. "The effects of any move would be felt in late 2008."

Indeed, what the central bank's Monetary Board will decide on today will help determine how fast the Philippine economy will grow, how fast the peso will appreciate against the US dollar and how fast the prices of goods and services will rise.

However, growing hesitation as to whether the central bank will indeed cut interest rates by 25 basis points is coming from bank treasurers and traders.

Aware of the increasingly divided opinion, many of them would not speak on the record except to echo the pro-rate cut official lines of their institutions.

Privately, many of them believe that the BSP will rather adopt a wait-and-see attitude and verify first if the threat of inflation down the road has indeed been minimized, especially with world oil prices still near record highs.

Unionbank Securities research head Ilan Rodrigo believes that it is this threat of rising prices which is dominant on the minds of policymakers at the central bank.

"Many are asking themselves, 'Is it really necessary to cut now?'" he said, adding that the effects of a premature rate cut could be aggravated by a sudden spike in world oil prices, resulting to a "double whammy" for local prices. And higher inflation could end hybrid economic growth.

But ING's Cuenia, the dissenter in a "no-brainer"

"We are enjoying the best of both worlds right now," he said. "We have high economic growth and low inflation."

If it wanted to, he said, BSP could even afford to walk in step with the US Fed and cut rates by as much as 50 basis points (bps).

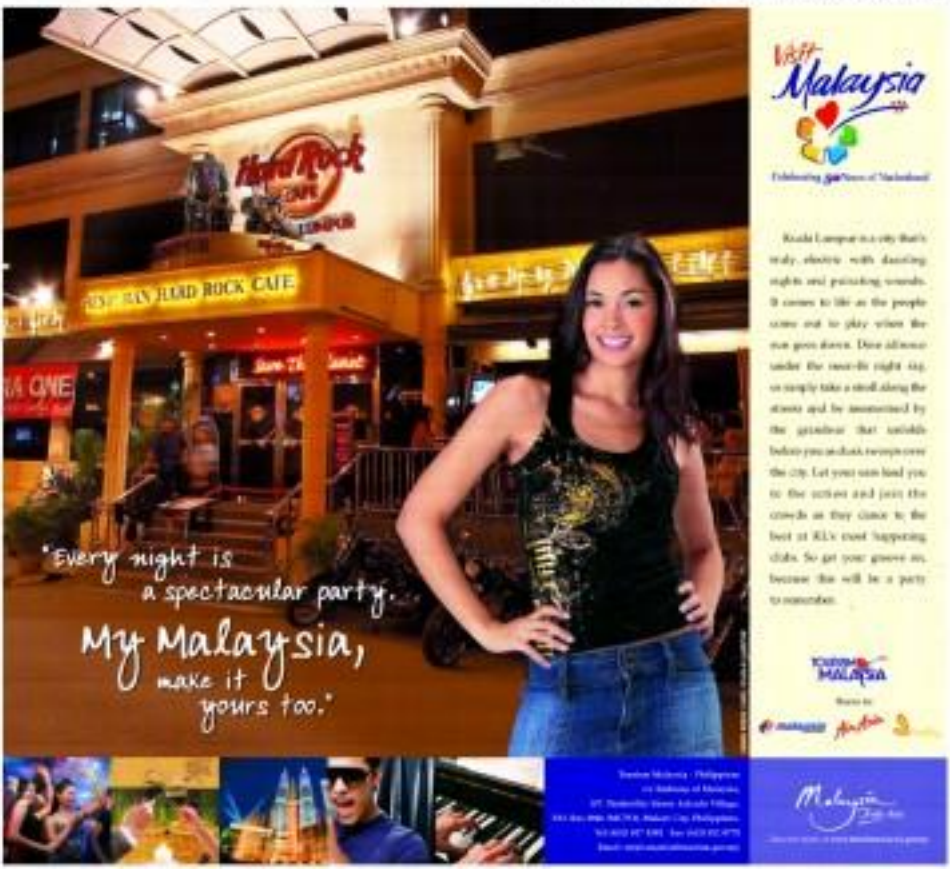
From the mixed signals offered by central bank officials in recent days, it seems clear that any monetary policy loosening would be more muted, perhaps even in the form of language that promises a future rate cut, while holding headline rates steady for now.

With financial markets having already priced in a rate cut, however, a less than generous easter on the part of the BSP may take the wind out of the current rally especially in the stock market.

"It would be bad for equities if they didn't cut, because that has been discounted already in recent weeks," Unionbank's Rodrigo said.

Nevertheless, he acknowledged that the BSP is in a right to given the need to weigh concerns of economic growth vis-à-vis containing prices.

"It has always been a balancing act for BSP" he said. "And it is a difficult one now."



LIFESTYLE

The yin and yang of gourmet food

Mezzaluna's chef Miguel says even dishes need balance

MEZZALUNA executive chef Carlo Miguel

Text by Yengie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Rene Hombalais

MEZZALUNA MARKED ITS first anniversary recently with a degustation that will now be a regular feature of the restaurant.

Executive chef Carlo Miguel personally prepares the food, pairing detailed portions of each course and presentation of every dish.

"When I write menus or prepare my food, what I really tend to do is to try to achieve balance in colors, textures, and flavors... A dish should have yin and a yang," he said.

A degustation (or tasting menu consists of several courses), each course a specialty of the house.

At Mezzaluna (Italian for "half moon"), the degustation, which will change every few months, showcases the restaurant's creative flair not heavily influenced by European cuisine and prepared with prime ingredients from the world's best suppliers.

Each dish in the five-course degustation will be paired with wine selections from distinguished European, Australian and American vineyards.

Miguel said degustation was quite popular in Sydney. He should know. He spent 12 years training in award-winning Sydney restaurants. He said the kicking menu afforded a chance to savor a restaurant's full range of talent and creativity.

Since Mezzaluna is also a showcase for some of the world's finest wines, the restaurant highlights selected vintages as well.

Miguel said the Mezzaluna dining experience included wine. "a great food and wine harvest." The restaurant takes great pains to store properly its wines—priced from P750 to P30,000 a bottle—in a refrigerated wooden wine cabinet.

The cabinet is designed to replicate the conditions of an excellent European wine cellar, Miguel said. "When you get to eat and wine to work together, it is like watching a graceful couple do an evening tango."

But, as everybody knows by now, food and wine harmony (since days no longer means strictly red for meats and white for fish or fowl).

"There is an old-school rule of wine drinking is to choose something you enjoy," said Miguel. "It's all up to you. It's impossible to note a good meal if you choose a wine that you enjoy, regardless of what wine experts say."

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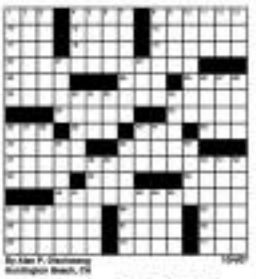
A diario's comic by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA

DAILY CROSSWORD



CONCEPTIS SU DOKO

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

	5	1	4					
						7		
		2			8			5
			6			1		2
7				5				9
6		3			4			
5			1			4		
	9							
					6	3	8	

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKO

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

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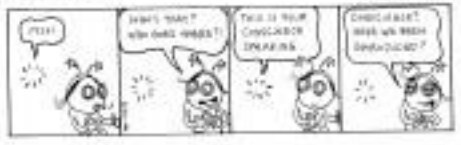


ANG MACHINE

Answer to previous puzzle

8	9	6	3	1	2	5	4	7
7	4	5	8	6	9	2	1	3
2	1	3	5	4	7	9	6	8
4	3	9	6	7	1	8	5	2
6	7	2	4	5	8	3	9	1
5	8	1	9	2	3	6	7	4
3	5	7	1	8	4	9	2	6
1	6	4	2	9	5	7	3	8
9	2	8	7	3	6	4	8	5

GARFIELD

HOROSCOPE

Mr. and Mrs. Candelaria tolerate the new branch of Cubao at Sta. Lucia East.

Pampango eat-all-you-can feast goes East

LOVERS OF KAPAMPANGAN FOOD EAST of Manila need not go all the way to Angeles or Quezon City to enjoy authentic Pampango cooking.

Cubao, the No. 1 Filipino buffet restaurant, has opened a branch on the ground level of Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall in Cainta, Rizal.

The new 140-seater Cubao is a spin-off and also strives to achieve the comfortingly Filipino feel typical of every Cubao branch.

Wall accents and bright lights give the restaurant a younger look while the colorful rustican tiles, antique chandeliers and wooden furniture give the place a touch of elegance similar to that of an oversized home.

Cubao offers Pampango's renowned dishes like Sizzling Sisig, Kare-Kare, Bulalo, Pakanan sa Gripon, Dampanga Crispy Crablets and an assortment of dessert like Tibok-Tibok, Leche Flan and the famous Mako Fruit Dessert-Halo-Halo bar.

BULALO

KARE-KARE

The menu now dishes like Oleo-Kalabasa, Tilan sa Bangus, Pata Cocido and Tapsilog (beef and pork cooked 'a la Adobong Visaya') will be part of the over 50 dishes Cubao serves.

Cubao has also launched its annual Parking Piano party package. Guest favorites like gift certificates, washing machines, DVD players, rice cookers and other appliances await those who will make Christmas party bookings.

Cubao's restaurants are at 87 Tibay drive, QC; 2/L, SM City North Edsa, QC; 4/L, Bldg. E, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong; 2/L, Robinsons Place Ermita, Manila; Glorietta 3, Makati; G/L, Robinsons Starmills, San Fernando Pampanga; 3/L, Clark Avenue Festival Mall, Alabang; G/F, SM City Clark; G/F, Greenhills Shopping, G/L, Sta. Lucia Grand East Mall; 2/L, Trillium. Another branch will soon open at SM City Taytay.

Call 3721013 or 4939868 for reservations; 421-9129 or 9155321 for catering.

THIS Mambo Jumbo Cake from the Diamond Hotel will surely be the piece de resistance of any party or celebration. With its different cake flavors, it's more than enough dessert to satisfy all kinds of cravings. Call 5265000.

SIZZLING Steak Lengua

Sumptuous trio

BURGOS MARKEAN has used Renaissance offers three new dishes for October and November.

The Ultimate Trio includes Angus Ribeye Steak Bonavelle (grilled USDA Angus Ribeye Steak served with mushroom and mashed potato), Szechuan Fresh Lapu-Lapu (slices of steak with broccoli, carrots, onions, premium oyster sauce, leeks with sweet and spicy sauce in lapu-lapu puree), and Mango n' Chops (breaded fresh shrimps deep fried and served with French fries and onion sauce).

Burgos has branches at 101 Tomas Morato Ave., QC; 3/L, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati; 2/L, The Podium, ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong; 2/L, Promenade, Greenhills; Sea Area 2/L, Gateway Mall, Araneta Center, Cubao, QC; 4/L, Main Mall, Seaside Wing, SM Mall of Asia, Pasay; 4/L, Robinsons Galleria, QC; and 2/L, The Block, SM City North Edsa, QC.

ANGUS Ribeye Steak Bonavelle

SHRIMPS n Chops

None such items in your supermarket

CASTILLEJOS Watermelon juice and wine de coco-and-dalandan cooler

Nani Labrador, who made her cafeteria food one of the most sought-after at one time, has gone into a new venture that showcases the versatility of local fruits

ASSISTANT cook Joseph Bersal stages/simmers for marmalade.

CASTILLEJOS Mango jam with Cocoloc and Mango Chutney; (below) sweet and spicy delis in syrup may be served with cream cheese or young pan.

Text by Linda B. Bohilo
Photos by Rudel Rubio

SHE INHERITED cooking skills and secrets learned in her grandparents' kitchens into successful food businesses.

Translating family recipes to appeal to a broader clientele, Lourdes "Nani" Magsaysay Labrador made the cafeteria of the Ramon Magsaysay Center on Roxas Boulevard a top favorite among guests in the Philippine Cultural Era between 1968 and 1972 when the area was administration.

People talked about the cafeteria the way they do today about fine-dining places.

And her first attempt at an independent venture in 1974, the Shamrock restaurant on Remedios Circle corner M. H. del Pilar in Malate, Manila, became a pleasant and vivid memory for people who delighted in its innovative cooking and fabulous baked items.

Labrador said Shamrock dishes were based on home recipes. Although she did not insist to be in chef, she had a lot to help her draw up Shamrock's remarkable menu.

She said, "We labored our own kitchen and one of our former employees is now a demonstration chef [for a major food manufacturer]."

After Shamrock closed in 1980, not a few people hoped the home economics graduate from the University of the Philippines who majored in food and nutrition would come up with another equally impressive project.

New food venture

Well, those who wondered what Labrador had been up to all these years would be happy to know that, while she had not returned to the restaurant business, she had not left the food enterprise all together.

Labrador, who took up post-graduate studies in hotel and restaurant management in the United States, has devoted her considerable talent and energy to a food venture that has matured since 1986 when she still was making Shamrock.

In fact, eleven of the old restaurant staff have been, even bought, those jars of jams and marmalades that created the brand name Castillejos Agri-Farms Inc.

Castillejos is the hometown of Lourdes, a convert of the late President Magsaysay.

From being a mere adjunct of the restaurant, Castillejos has now become Labrador's main enterprise, turning out jams, jellies, marmalades, pickles and fruits in syrup.

Castillejos has preserved coconut and guava shells in syrup, stuffed the latter sweet with nuts in case and added mango to the traditional watermelon-rice, among others.

Though still not commercially available, Labrador has turned lipstick into jelly. She has also started to make sugared pineapples, as Filipinos do it and not the Thai way.

Produced in limited quantities, Castillejos items are available at the museum at Gonzaga's Inn to Silang, Cavite, the Manila's Oriental, Mall of Gift Shop in Greenbelt, some convenient and grocery, and, of course, directly from the company.

For those wanting the products as gifts or giveaways, Castillejos products are packaged in native baskets and trays.

Castillejos Agri-Farms Inc. is at 199 Elisa, Mandaluyong City; tel. 5314652 or 5314658; fax 5314888; and e-mail labrador@pi-mail.net.

COUNTRY COOKING
Molly Rosete

The 'barako' brew

AS FORMER GOVERNOR OF Batangas Vicente Mayo explained, the short-lived boom of Liga coffee in the 1800s, six months in all, was because during the fiesta, a coffee tree led the procession instead of the town's patron saint.

It could be something he "believe it or not." Governor Mayo must be well-to-do story, assured in what he was telling us.

He said Lipa'ot were so rich, because of the coffee boom, they had to figure out where to display their thousands. Hence, the precious stones were sewn into their slippers.

And the town's men, well-versed of high school, were wearing rhinestone suits even if they were only standing at [illegible].

That was one of the stories at lunch before a talk on food tourism organized by the Batangas University two weeks ago (more on that in another column).

That story was also told by Maria Eden Kanglaan in the essay "When Coffee Bloomed in Lipa" (Vol. 7, No. 3 Spice Heritage: Taking Filipino Food Abroad). The "rich nonlinear wealth of the people of Lipa" resulted from the plant's being the only supplier of coffee beans when all plantations around the world were devastated by a pest.

But a twist, the legendary, destroyed the Liga coffee plants. By 1895, the plants had totally disappeared.

Macha brew

The preferred coffee in Batangas is barako. It is the variety Liberica, although Robusta and Excelsa are also grown there.

Brewing coffee the Batangueño way meant boiling the freshly ground beans in water then adding sugar, lots of it. There was an illustration in the Ilustrados, which was how my family called the coffee pot, so that ration everyone had their cup of coffee, a scant of black sediment remained in the cup.

Barako brew has a reputation for being strong coffee, the kind that causes heart palpitations. Just reading the recipe of Batangueño Coffee sort of confirms that.

1 1/2 cups ground coffee
1 1/2 cups
1 pail of water

That was from the manual "An Introduction to Coffee" by Pacita U. Juan and Ms. Regina S. Francisco." Chit Juan is the face of Figaro Coffee, the enduring promoter of barako.

The manual is a primer for people who want to go into the coffee industry whether as producers, operators of coffee shops, baristas or just passionate coffee lovers.

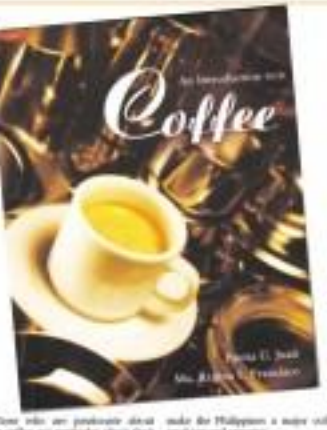
Anti-heart palpitations, the book says there is "no connection between coffee, caffeine and heart disease." That is mentioned in the page on coffee confection lovers: the non-connection between coffee and diseases such as cancer and osteoporosis or brittle bones.

In my family of four, I'm the only coffee drinker; I need it to wake up, to aid digestion and to make me sleep. How coffee can have opposite effects—helping me to wake up and then to sleep—is one of the mysteries in my life. Not that I want to solved.

Moving up

Just like their ancestors before us drinking wine, starting with plenty and moving up to smooth and fine, though unconsciously expensive reds and whites, coffee-drinking is also a progression—from instant coffee to the supposedly higher and famous-expensive brews: dried product to the brewed to the espresso.

I went through all that then dipped back to the brewed because I genuinely like it rather than the thick and small espresso serving. Besides, I take my coffee with a cup of milk.



Those who are passionate about their coffee are particular about their beans—how these are roasted and, of course, how the coffee is cooked. But, if they are not careful, they may end up as coffee bores.

The coffee bore was described in "The Official Foodie Handbook" by Ann Barr and Paul Levy (in her 30 new Definitions Class.) as younger alcoholic look or a person who considers food a "favorite subject."

"The coffee bore prefers the brands of the coffee tree of the Coffea arabica species. He dislikes stubbaby robusta (which you can spot by its smaller beans), therefore has to settle for it. It is very difficult to buy 100 percent Arabica coffee, though it is indigenous to Ethiopia and still grows wild there. The third species, C. liberica , is chiefly of interest to Liberians, and there are relatively few Freedmen in Liberia."

The authors obviously did not know of cigar and its liberica. I hope they get to know about it so Figaro is starting to make the Philippines a major coffee producer and exporter.

The big coffee story there days is the alcohol. It is a specialized coffee bean taken from the droppings of wild mountain cats (alcoholic). The wild cats eat the best and ripest cherries from the plant but the beans are excreted whole. The beans are cleaned, roasted and brewed.

While the shock value of the alcohol source is probably what sells it in this highly competitive foodie world, the idea of having the best cherries, without the cats, is part of our coffee-drinking history.

The book "Introduction to Coffee" says, "In the providence from great civilizations, the best crops (those with the richest diversity) are separated for private consumption and not move sold."

Excuse me then while I drink my coffee.

E-mail the author at pinoyfood@yahoo.com

Filipinos just love rice

FILIPINOS JUST CAN'T live without rice. Be it breakfast, lunch, snack, dinner or any other meal in between, rice just has to be served. Here is a recipe from Swift Vienna Sausage that indulges the Pinoy's love for rice.

Vienna Rice Island

1. 70-g Swift Vienna Sausage
1. tbsp Barrio fresh Margarine, melted
½ cup cooked rice
1 small onion, chopped
½ cup canned pineapple tidbits
½ cup canned, minced
½ tsp sugar
1 bay leaf
Salt
Pepper

Sauté the rice in the melted butter. When the rice turns yellow, add the onion and sauté for three more minutes. Add the pineapple, celery, salt, pepper, sugar and bay leaf. Mix together gently and cover. Allow to simmer for about 20 minutes or until rice is tender. Cook sausage on a skillet until light brown. Put the sausage in the center of the serving dish. Arrange the sausage around the "island" of rice. Garnish with parsley. Makes 2-3 servings.

DATE and Toffee Pudding with Butterscotch Sauce and Vanilla Mascarpone

The yin and yang of gourmet food

Front page C1

Preview

For the previews degustation during Mezzaluna's anniversary celebration, portions were limited to allow a diner to savor fully the symphony of flavors, textures and aromas of each course.

A Silver Wagyu Burger was first to be served. The melt-in-your-mouth beef perked up everyone's palate. Truly tender and juicy, it was made from deeply marbled beef and served with pretzeled gorgonzola and paired with Rit Royal, a cocktail of sparkling wine and raspberry liqueur that was savory, smooth and so easy to drink, most guests had a second glass.

Miguel has a special attachment to Wagyu beef. He eats it regularly, almost a part of his daily diet. The beef is said to be healthy because of its unique marbling traits.

Miguel said he lost almost 30 pounds in just five-and-a-half months from eating Wagyu beef with simple salad or lots of vegetables.

After the burger, Steaks River Farm Wagyu rib eye salad with tomatoes and mediterranean was served. The richness of the beef contrasted with the salad of crisp greens and roasted tomatoes topped with a balsamic reduction.

SNAKE River Farm Wagyu Rib Eye Salad with Roasted Tomatoes, Mushrooms in Balsamic Vinegar paired with a glass of Antinori Bianco 2006

MAPLE and Brandy-glazed Confit Kurobuta Pork Belly with Braised Tuscan White Beans and Fresno Orange Slaw

MEZZALUNA marked its first anniversary with a special degustation promo.

Accompanying the salad was the 2006 Antinori Bianco, a rare yellow wine with sweet tannins and lingering fruit to the finish.

The Russian Cut Beefsteak with Roasted potatoes, asparagus, hollandaise and greens was next. The cut was pearlized, a process that sealed most of its moisture and preserved its texture. A creamy hollandaise sauce enhanced the flavor of the fish while an herb salad added bright notes.

Pork tender and nicely glazed, the cut was served with Smoking Loon Chardonnay on an act to complement the delicate dish.

Before the main meals, palates were cleansed with a refreshing and delightful mango sorbet.

The Maple and Brandy-glazed Confit Kurobuta pork belly with braised Tuscan white beans and fennel orange slaw highlighted the degustation.

MRW Wagyu Burger

TWICE-BAKED Gorgonzola Soufflé with Stuffed Honey, Arugula and Walnut Praline

Slow-cooked, the scrumptious pork belly that came from Iloilo was served with whipped skin lacquered with maple and brandy. Peanut and mango provided contrast. The pork absorbed all those flavors from the different ingredients, each one distinct but blending well.

The pork belly was paired with the 2005 Antinori Santa Cristina (90 percent Sangiovese and 10 percent merlot). That ruby red wine has depth and body to complement a hearty meal.

Highlight

Perhaps the best part of the multicourse meal for many of the guests was the Twice-Baked Gorgonzola Soufflé with stuffed honey, arugula and walnut praline. It was worth the wait.

Miguel said the savory but light cheese course would always follow an indulgent pork course. The cheese was crisp on the outside but super soft in the center. It was paired with a nice Smirking Loon Cabernet Sauvignon.

Capping the fantastic meal was Date and Toffee Pudding. The dessert was playfully spiced with butterscotch sauce and vanilla mascarpone. The moist, classic Sydney dessert was matched with dates.

Mezzaluna's degustation cost P1,300++. And this October, Miguel is offering a new menu consisting of more than 50 dishes including steaks, seafood, foie gras, homemade fresh pasta and risotto, pizza and other grilled specialties.

Mezzaluna is on 11th Street, G/F Arnos Arcade Commercial Complex, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig (tels. 8568718 or 8562891).

THE CONSUMER

Waiter is served here

By Linda B. Bolilo

A COLLEAGUE SHOULD HAVE HEEDed the signs during their first visit to a restaurant on the second floor, Hobe Gil wing, of Robinsons Place Manila.

A waiter slept on the table they neared and none of the other people wanted to disturb him.

She also said the place served good food so, against their better judgment, they returned and now would want to share a lesson learned from the encounter.

She would like to advise people who dine out to check carefully their bills before paying.

"An additional item we did not order was (added to our) bill," she wrote.

When they called the attention of the woman cashier, identified only as Domingo, to the error, she did not show any reaction but merely returned to the register to prepare the correct bill.

Given the cashier's attitude, they concluded the pudding of their bill was not an overnight fee was deliberate. "Baka isang nakakatawa."

The e-mail sender added that the staff, like that first time, did not seem to be in service mode. They were served something other than what they ordered. The replacement was what they wanted was no longer available. "Why didn't they say (that) our order was not available?" so they could have made their own choice? she asked.

The waiter also refused to give clean condiments, insisting on sprinkling them on the food himself.

Formaldehyde in shampoo

Unilever Philippines, through its brand team and corporate development team, has enjoined its staff to help answer an e-mail asking if formaldehyde in shampoo represented a health risk.

The company said:

"1. Use of formaldehyde as a preservative in cosmetics, including shampoos is allowed and regulated by BNAD (Bureau of Food and Drugs).

"Branded shampoos uses five times less preservative than the allowable limit set for cosmetic products by BFAD. Preservatives prevent germs, bacteria, molds and fungus from growing in the shampoo, the same way chlorine preserves our drinking water.

"2. Formaldehyde will wash off from your hair when rinsing. It does not deposit any accumulate in your scalp or head.

"3. It has always been declared in the shampoo's packs and labels.

"4. Other products have formaldehyde like nail polish, sealers, binders, some medicines. Cosmetics are different from food products."

Feedback

Theresa Arandia-Marin, marketing services head of Glimmerz, wrote to apologize for the persistent non-messages from "third-party sales agents about our 'rush loan'."

She gave the assurance that the bank was taking steps to improve further their service delivery including that of third-party sales agencies.

She said the bank "shall undertake the necessary measures to develop quality sales and service programs for our products."

That is good to hear because, after the item on Glimmerz came out, a reader told us of her own unhappy experience with bank "third party" sales agent.

When the reader asked the agent to stop sending her those messages, the agent told her she should change her SIM (subscriber's identification module) card instead so she would have a different number.

Meanwhile, reader Jeff Serenjo, searching for the same item, is inclined to think telemarketers "have access to Globe Telecom's postpaid subscribers... Globe Telecom should explain why and how these people were able to get our information."

On the other hand, if what one agent said was true that banks were "charging privilege information, isn't that a violation of prevailing bank regulations and our right to privacy?" he asked.

Serjanco said, "In the US, telemarketers raised to observe rules such as guide to time, day and points of access (codes, e-mail, etc.). They will do these activities in accordance with federal laws, otherwise they will face heavy sanctions (civil and criminal)."

He expressed the hope that Filipino lawmakers would enact laws covering these practices and governments regulatory bodies would set ground rules.

DINING OUT

A taste of the Big Easy

ENJOY NEW ORLEANS' COOKING AT GUMBO Restaurant, at the 2/F, Entertainment Hall, SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City, and 2/F, The Block, SM City North EDSA, This October and November, Gumbo offers three new dishes: Pork Rosalie (cream and fish with bacon, steamed and served with caper salsa and spaghettini pasta in olive oil), Grilled Rib-eye Steak Marsala (US$28, Angus Rib-eye steak, served with mixed vegetables in marsala sauce) and Shrimps Creole (spaghettini sautéed shrimps in tomatoes and ultimate sauce with red bell pepper and chili flakes, served with breaded fish balls. Pork garnished with green onions). (tel. 8430490).

MANILA PAVILION's Seasons offers Buffet Breakfast featuring fruit shake-shakes and other international dishes for P450 net. The buffet is available for lunch, 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m., and dinner, 6:30-10:30 p.m. (tel. 8551212 loc. 3315).

RESIDENCE HOTEL MANILA presents "Bakaw Pusit" and "Wonton of Seafood Wanan" until Oct. 15 at Riviera Cafe (tel. 8546888 or e-mail foodbeverage@residencehotelmanila.com).

GOLD HOTEL features "Octoberfest!" Enjoy a 50-percent discount on San Miguel beer during Happy Hours, 5:30-8 p.m., and October fest 8-10 p.m. every Friday night. Avail of the 5+1 deal for a bucket promo and enjoy your favorite pulutan for free (tel. 9245000).

BELEN's Tapas Bar features guest chef Bingay Pamentido 3-6 p.m. every weekend. Tapas Dalandan include Pulutan Bicolan, Salabat Wraps, Squash Blossoms, Spanakopeta, and Gambas and Empanadas. Tapas Frias include Morcilla, Fig and Prosciutto, Tuna Tartare, Smoked Salmon & Black Caviar. Fruit Fruit and Fromage and Shrimp Brochettes. Price is P700++ per person. Sparkling wines are available at P300++ per person (tel. 7288888).

GUMBO's Fish Rosalie

PEACH PASSION
Combine fruit brandy with vanilla vodka and what do you get? Peaches and Cream Vodka Pinnacle! Layers of luscious vodka are topped with your choice of ice cream and fresh peaches, served with a dollop of whipped cream. Enjoy the combination for breakfast or any time of the day at Heaven N' Eggs Eastwood City branch, 9121173 or (cell) 09157409373.

THE OLD SWISS INN Hakuei offers brunch buffet on Sundays for as low as P658 net per person. The buffet, available 11 a.m.-3 p.m., features traditional and Swiss favorites such as corned beef, Reuben's, eggs Benedict, pancakes, salad, pasta, grilled sausages, and Bakewell Chocolate fondue. Old Swiss Inn Makati is located at the G/F Somerset Olympia Bldg., Makati Avenue (beside The Peninsula Manila). Call 8188211 or 8188212, or 0915-9916169.

CHICKEN TACOS
Chili's presents Chicken Club Tacos, three soft flour tortillas filled with mesquite chicken, chopped crispy bacon, diced tomatoes, mixed cheeses, lettuce, and chipotle ranch dressing. It comes with Pueblo rice and black beans or home-style fries or tortilla corn on the sub. Another new addition to the menu is Caramel Apple Tart, skillet-baked sweet apple tart topped with vanilla ice cream, warm caramel sauce and cinnamon. Chili's is at Greenhills, Makati Northtown Greenhills, and Ronac Manila, Quezon City.

KITCHEN RESCUE
Aggie Aquino

On-the-spot 'lechon tupa'

Roberto Aquino also does kebabs, lamb chops, lamb leg, steaks

I FIRST MET ROBERTO Aquino among years ago when my mother-in-law threw a party for me, masterminded by Marnie Ong, at Jessy Lao's residence.

She quit roasted lamb was just so good he became a fixture in many of our parties.

I lost touch with him for some teenage years until I saw him again at Rio Mancari's surprise party for her husband Ariel. It is good to know that he is alive and kicking, although he has now gone to, and still serving the best whole Mediterranean marinated lamb carcass on a stick.

Apart from his lamb carcass, he also does kebabs, lamb chops, lamb leg, steaks with sauces, Pretty soon, lechon manok, Arlo and Achoy will be added to his entire spit repertoire.

Next time you have something special, give him a call: landline 2 and 0916-5464321 and 27341167. One hundred percent lamb guaranteed to put you in paroxysms!

Divino Pan de Sal

I am tired of serving pan de sal that stays very all the time. Do you have pan de sal ideas and recipes to share?

ROSE

Before I get to share, let me first tell you about my favorite pan de sal.

In a little mill in Rizal in Lipa, Quezon City is where you will find Nora Divino, owner of the San Antonio bakery that bakes among the yummiest pan de sal around (tel. 6331126).

There is the sweet kind, or flavored, as others, soft and tender even three days after purchase! I find you not when I see crisp strong so, malambot pa!

My problem with it is you can't have it on special occasions with absolutely no difficulty. My 3-year-old son Diego devours four! It is excellent with and without palaman! I thank my mom's sweet rolls for this discovery!

NORA Divino of San Antonio Bakery—nicknamed Divino Pan De Sal

Pan de Sal Bar with 5 Fillings

Here is part of my ideas! When I serve merienda, I usually do a pan de sal bar. Here are my recipes. All you need to do is slice your pan de sal. Bring out a Del grill-ito, heat it up. Put some butter on your grill, slightly toast your pan de sal and stuff with your filling of choice. The pan de sal must be grilled just before serving, preferably on the spot. Enjoy!

Ground Beef:
¼ c oil
2 c shallots, diced
2 tbsp garlic, chopped
2 tomatoes, diced
2 small cans corned beef (I use Purefoods Blue Label)

1 c diced potatoes or canned apples (optional). Fine diced apples in enough canned tomato sauce (garlic sprinkle with a little sugar, transfer in a baking dish and bake 350°F until apples are tender)

Salt and pepper
Sour oil. Add shallots and tomatoes.

Add garlic and potatoes; cook until tomatoes are soft.

Add corned beef. Cook to heat corned beef through. Add potatoes or apples.

Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Sandwich into grilled pan de sal. Serve mainstuffed.

Queueing Pan with Herbs:
200 g queueing pan, sliced
3 tbsp parsley, chopped
½ c shallots, chopped
1 c tomatoes, chopped
2 tsp fresh oregano, chopped
Extra virgin olive oil
Pepper

Arrange queueing pan on a glass. Evenly distribute the rest of the ingredients on top of queue.

Drizzle with olive oil. Sprinkle with pepper.

Slightly heat cheese on grill until edges begin to melt. Sandwich into grilled pan de sal.

Queueing Pan with Jam:
200 g queueing pan, sliced
Unsalted butter
Any sugar queueing pan on a platter. Put a dollop of jam or jelly atop each slice of queueing.

Slightly heat cheese on grill until edges begin to melt. Sandwich into grilled pan de sal.

Seafood mix:
2/3 c olive oil
2 tbsp garlic
½ c onions, chopped
½ c tomato, optional
3 medium crabs, finely chopped
4 raw shellfish in tomato sauce, drained (I use BBI)
1 c eggplant, grilled and chopped
Salt and pepper
Chili Flakes

Saute garlic, onions, eggplants, and tomato in olive oil. Add seafood. Season to taste. Sandwich into grilled pan de sal.

Ham:
250 g sweet cured ham of choice, sliced ½ inch thick

Glaze:
½ c dark brown sugar
2 tbsp fresh lime juice
1 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp cola
1 tbsp mustard
2 tbsp butter

Whisk all ingredients until sugar is dissolved.

Cook ham on a heated grill plate or a pan with a little butter. Brush with glaze. Sandwich into grilled pan de sal.

Toffee repair

I have been receiving inquiries where Toffee pans can be fixed, refinished or recoated. I was unable to reply since I knew of no one who did this.

Last week, Alistar Chan-de told me she knew of someone and she said they did quite a fantastic job! If you have a nonstick member of pots and pans, they will pick them up and invoice them. Call Rick Intemolocal at 6.200737.

E-mail the author at rsquinat@inquirer.com.ph

Shabu-shabu place opens

HAO FUSION BAR OPENED a new branch at Festival Supermall in Alabang in response to the growing demand for shabu-shabu and seafood restaurants south of Metro Manila.

Owned and managed by Jacinto Elan, Hao Fusion has buffet shabu-shabu, as well as a wide selection of fresh seafood, poultry, pork and beef all freshly cooked.

Children can enjoy barbecue, sisantigo and hotdogs.

Hao Fusion Restaurant is at the mall's second level, near the Mid Taste Hall. Open 11 a.m.-9 p.m. daily. It accepts reservation for special occasions, meetings and other events.

Festival Supermall is at Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa. Call 8553111 and 8553115, or e-mail festivalsupermall.com.ph.

HAO FUSION Shabu-Shabu

Ghoulishly delightful treats

TIS THE SEASON YET AGAIN to ghoulishly fun treats for Halloween! Make your hands dirty and follow the gooey steps to making these recipes from San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center. Get your kids spooked so they take turns off Mossy Eyeballs and Chopped Hand Pears then, quench your thirst with our version of Vampire's Blood Shake. Happy Halloween!

Visit www.sanmiguelfood.com.

MEATY Eyeballs

VAMPIRE'S Blood Shake

Meaty Eyeballs

Meatball:
½ c Monterey Ground Beef
1 pc egg
¼ c breadcrumbs
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
Pimiento-stuffed olives

Sauce:
½ c banana catsup
2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp garlic, chopped
2 tbsp brown sugar

Mix all meatball ingredients in a bowl except the olives. Form into 1-inch balls then push in a piece of olive into each of the meatballs to create an eye effect. Put "eyeballs" in a baking dish. Set aside.

In another bowl, mix all the ingredients for the sauce. Pour over "eyeballs" then bake for 30 minutes at 350°F.

Serves five.

Purebrook Tender Juicy Chopped Hand Pasta

200 g spaghetti
2 tbsp Magnolia Nata-de
2 pc Purebrook Tender Juicy Hotdog, thinly
4 pc Purebrook Tender Juicy Hotdog, chopped
2 pc Purebrook Tender Juicy Hotdog, thinly
2 pc bread
1-200g can Purebrook Spaghetti Sweet Sauce

Cook pasta according to directions.

Heat oil. Cook hotdog and set aside.

Shape bread like the palm of a hand. Toast and set aside.

In a saucepan, heat sweet sauce and set aside.

To assemble:

Place pasta on a plate. Line hotdog like fingers. Use Nata-de Koning as the fluids and Hotdog Rolls as

GRAVEYARD Sandwiches

the chopped part of the fingers and Baguio ketchup as the other fingers. Place the toasted bread as palm of a hand. Place the sweet sauce as the palm and on the chopped hotdog fingers.

Serves three to four.

Vampire's Blood Shake

2 c Yoghurt Strawberry Sugar
1-2 tsp vanilla extract
1 c fresh or canned strawberry
2 cups cubs
4 scoop Magnolia Strawberry Ice Cream
2 c Magnolia Fresh Milk

Mix all ingredients in a blender until smooth. Pour into serving glasses. Drizzle with strawberry syrup on top for additional "blood." Add ice cubes if desired.

Serves five.

Graveyard Sandwiches

2 pc. Purebrook Ground Beef
Magnolia Nata-de-Coco drop frying
2 pc toast baguette
2 slice Purebrook Cooked Ham
4 tbsp Magnolia Cheese Spread
1 bar Magnolia Cream Cheese, softened
1 pack Magnolia Red Fruits Jam, Strawberry
Mustard, Pet nuggets and drain.

Slice baguette in the middle and toast.

In one baguette, spread Magnolia Cheese Spread and top with ham. In the other baguette, spread cream cheese and top with strawberry jam. In one side of each baguette, make a slit to insert nuggets to make it look like a tombstone.

Serves one.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ernesto C. Velarde

No strangers to disillusion

By Oliver M. Palomback
Contributor

THE COMING-OF-AGE drama "Invisible Boys" plays the obvious routes, attempting to reel in viewers with alter-ethnicity, but succeeds only half the time. Jean Javier experiences an identity crisis, but the film is decently mature and beautifully executed.

"December Boys," set in 1980s Australia, is based on the 1963 novel by Michael Noonan. It follows four young orphans, one of them played by Review Andrew Ryan Garvin, superstar Daniel Radcliffe. Pursued by bullies, the quartet shares the same birthday month and the desire for steadiness/belong to.

Saul Hendy, whose TV directing credits include episodes of "Brothers Grimsby," "The Peacocks," and "The Office," has subtlety and finesse, but the drama is disengaging at times.

Coloring backdrops

The orphans go on holiday at an old couple's seaside place and end up somewhere else, the attention of another couple in the area. So, the competition doesn't get ugly, just boring.

But the scenery can't be beat. You can tease out of the storylines to take in calming crews of beaches, hills, and bizarre rock formations.

Radcliffe handles his role capably enough, trying to shake off all things Hogwarts even as the kids collectively encounter flashbacks and sadness to different times. On the "bright" side, "December Boys" is able to compress these elements—heartbreak, dashed optimism and hope—into a comprehensible package.

More raves for indies

By Rhetmel R. Cruz

THE INDEPENDENT movie scene is as its busiest, with quality selections erupting cursed and swards here and abroad.

'Lalakbo sa Pierrot'

Joy Allanyon's "Ang Lalakbo sa Pierrot" got a "B" rating from the Cinema Evaluation Board for "innovative storytelling."

Board CEB members Digna Santiago, quoted critic: "The script is the best [shown] of this thrilling film."

Jose "Joy" Allanyon, director, said, "This is about the search for oneself through the lens of racial prejudice, homosexuality, maybe, and fantasy, and the lies that people create to escape their realities."

"Pierrot" tells of Blanca's (Bossy Lacuna) search for his father (Richard Quan) that leads him to Lobo, Batangas, where he ends up an caretaker of the lighthouse. He meets Jerome (Justin de Leon), a gay man from the city. Then starts his "homework journey." Sammy (Jennifer Lee), Blanca's girlfriend completes the love triangle.

"There is graphic sex, but I believe in the honesty and sincerity of the film," said Jose Javier, a young member CEB member.

A gentle R entitles a movie to a 40-per-cent tax rebate.

The film, produced by Viva Digital, Beyond the Box, stars Crispin Pineda, Kim Poole, Bossy, Richard Quan, Monik Pamangan and Donna Garcia.

'Foster Child'

Rolando "Ivanis" Mendoza's "Foster Child" is the Philippine entry to the Asian Film Awards in Hong Kong.

Mendoza's film, produced by Centerstage Productions, is about a boy who is forced to live with his aunt after his parents are killed in a car accident.

"Foster Child" is the first film to be shown in the Philippines after it was screened in the Cannes Film Festival's Directors' Fortnight.

Mendoza's "Kaleldo" won the Best Director award in the Cinemanila International Film Festival in 2005.

Testy Ms. Kapamilya out to irk Ms. Kapuso

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Anne Carvajal

HABANG-A TV commercial shoot for a beauty product, a Kapamilya actress kept making boo-boos when words came out of Kapuso actress. The director told her to stop, in vain. Ms. Kapamilya ay ayaw huminto. Ayaw compromise—playfully, but it was obvious she was trying to outmaganda Ms. Kapuso.

The real reports people said it only doomed how insecure Ms. Kapamilya was about Ms. Kapuso. (One of the make-up artists fumoned, "Kaso ito ba dahil parang binabastos nya talagang mga ang maldita, parang nanunuya ang mga bida?"

Ms. Kapuso kept her composure, think goodness. Minsan the ang line-of the ad should be, "Ikaw ang nagsisi sa mall, when's the kulasisi sa kanya ah?"

Miss enough?

Tommy Tello has owned up to being the father of Gardene Aguilar's baby who was born in the US. I wonder if beauty queen Anneliese Concepcion, who's also in the States, and said to be pregnant, has delivered her baby. Tello pinpointing an actress star as the "culprit" relieves to the down. Still he be case enough to do a Jeanne Tello?

Quotable quotes

Here are quotable quotes I gathered from some celebs during my bombing run with them:

Anneliese Paredes: "It's not a no to be born poor. It's a no to the poor."

Gloria Diaz: "Beauty is skin deep, but ugliness is to the bone."

Cesar Montano: "You are the goldsmith of your fate. Don't let others dictate your future."

Vicki Belo: "The only sacrifice a broken heart is to fall in love with someone else, but that will just lead to another heartache."

Cristhian Bautista: "What you give wholeheartedly there's no room for cashing anyway."

Dingdong Dantes: "My flattering when people say I'm sexy but that's not how I want to be remembered."

Pops Fernandez: "When you're in a relationship with someone from show biz, there are others involved. The fans."

'Sabado Boys'

Carli Lalu Magsaysay, Pido Gustos, Jimmy Bondoc, Mike Chan, Tito Guiam and DJ Mike in the new season of "Sabado Boys" on RPN 9, 9:30, Saturday nights. It's like a weekend gimmick delivered on your TV screen.

Lalu and Pido are two of my late drinking buddies. I'm sure they will be on sunday on the TV show in when we children.

All of the hosts are accomplished musicians in different genres, so expect a full collaboration. Jimmy is known as "Manilyn," Lalu is the R&B Prince Pido is "DL Acoustic." Esp to Dingdong's former main man, DJ Mike is from the Alabilas and Mike is the

DID YOU KNOW...

THEY COME—Kate Hudson, Kristen Dunst and Nike Wilson were behind the camera for Glamour magazine's "Real Hollywood"—short films based on readers' personal stories. The films premiere Oct. 9 in Los Angeles. AP

Testy Ms. Kapamilya out to irk ...

(From page D1)

Ballsbot.

"Salaula Boys" is out to redefine hip and the-cacao-scout-says-long-after-Santa-Ana-sight-is-over.

New GMA artist

Versatile visceral performer and recording artist Ayen Munji-Laurel makes new heights as a member of GMA 7's Artist Center. The multi-talented "Lovingit Crossed Quoted" won "Outstanding Performer of the Year for Drum "Video" in the 20th Aliw Awards. Aside from that, Ayen recorded the most endearing rendition to Philippine Theater history "Buena an Gloo."

Mr Laurel is definitely not one to sit on his laurels. He is set to conquer more heights ahead.

Fashion event

Come to your most leisure outfit on Oct. 6, Saturday, at Warehouse on 135

More raves...

(From page D1)

Child" topped the special jury prize at the 2007 Toronto International Film Festival in Kazakhstan, according to producer Bobbie Tan of Jedo Films.

The festival, now on its fourth year, ran from Sept. 28 to Oct. 1 in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The special jury trophy comes with a cash prize, said Tan.

Hayahisa is in Vancouver, Canada, where "Never Child" is participating in another festival.

"Imam told me that, after watching the film, the jurors congratulated him," Tan added. Anderson in a phone interview.

"Forever Child" is also participating in the Pesaro International Film Festival in Rimini this month, and three 20 other festivals after that, Tan said.

"Kalwadas"

Jeffrey Jose "Kalwadas" (The Rooster)" has been invited to the 15th edition of the Black Movie Festival in Geneva, where it will compete for selection. Aired on International, the festival runs from Feb. 1 to 15, according to website www.blackmovie.ch.

"Our selection committee appreciated the strength and originality of the film," Festival artistic director Jean-Francois Amiguet said in an e-mail to MTB producer Joji Alonzo. "We were truly honored [that Alonzo could [join] the selection."

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 WEDDING DAZE	2 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	4 THE FALLEN FOR YOU
GLORIETTA 4	1 EVENING	2* RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	3D* DECEMBER BOYS	
	4 HAIRSPRAY	5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	6 WEDDING DAZE	7 NO RESERVATIONS
GREENHILLS 1	1 DECEMBER BOYS		2 WEDDING DAZE	
GREENHILLS 2	1D NO RESERVATIONS		2-3 SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL	
	3 HAIRSPRAY	4 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	5 DECEMBER BOYS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1D WEDDING DAZE		2 DECEMBER BOYS	
	3 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	4 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	5 NO RESERVATIONS	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	2 DAYWATCH	3 THE FALLEN FOR YOU	4 SHADOW OF JAPAN
MARKET! MARKET!	1 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION		2 THE FALLEN FOR YOU	
	3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	4 WEDDING DAZE	5 DECEMBER BOYS	
TRINOMA	1 THE FALLEN FOR YOU	2 EVENING	3 NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	4 DECEMBER BOYS
	6 NO RESERVATIONS	6 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	7* WEDDING DAZE	

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

- Glorietta — SPI Appliances Madness — September 28 to October 16 @ Glorietta Activity Center
- Greenbelt — Viva Mexico: A Traditional Mexican Cuisine Exhibit — October 8 to 14 @ Greenbelt 3 Lobby
- Alabang Town Center — Fitness At The Town — September 3 to December 15, 2007, Mon. / Wed. / Fri. - 6 PM, Town Plaza
- Ayala Center Cebu — SPI Autoimmune Exhibit — October 11 to 14, Piazza
- Market! Market! — Hairspray: "Hairdo Dapat Dapat Ayan" Mall Tour — October 6, 3 PM, Activity Center
- Glorietta — Repertory Philippines presents LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST — September 15 - October 7, 2007
- Ayala Museum — HYBRIDITY: Neon Lasso Nights — September 29 to October 28, 2007, Museum Floor
- Trinoma — Rhythm Academy: Alive with the Kilyawan Boys — October 6, 7 PM, Trinoma Park

CHEER FACTOR

ATLANTIS Productions' hit staging of the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical "Avenue Q" (described as a cross between "Sesame Street" and "Howl") will be back Dec. 14-23 at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium in PCEC Pitx, Makati. In the stellar cast of this local production are Rachel Alejandro, Pamchie De Peña Rivera, Joel Trinidad, Ryo Isabelle Watanabe, Francis Glaso and Akki Tagaytay as Gary Coleman. Call 892-7078.

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I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
1408
THE BRAVE ONE
I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
SHOOT 'EM' UP
RUSH HOUR 3
UNDERDOG
A LOVE STORY
THE HOST
DISTURBIA
EVENING
DON'T LOOK BACK
WRONG TURN
THE LAST LEGION
SEMBRANO
DAYWATCH
THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
BRATZ
SKINWALKERS
PLANET TERROR
I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
RUSH HOUR 3 DTS
ROGUE ASSASSIN
THE BRAVE ONE
THE LAST LEGION
SEMBRANO
I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
THE BRAVE ONE
I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
SEMBRANO
DAYWATCH
ROGUE ASSASSIN

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GALLERIA

1 NO RESERVATION 1 THX	6 ROGUE ASSASIN
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3	7 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY
3 EVENING	8 Indefilme TUNTO
4 DECEMBER BOYS	9 SHOOT 'EM UP
5 WEDDING DAZE	10 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU

ERMITA

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3	
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN	5 WEDDING DAZE
3 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU	6 NO RESERVATION
4 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU	7 ANG LALAKE sa PAROLA

METRO EAST

1 NO RESERVATION	6 WEDDING DAZE
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3	8 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
3 SHOOT 'EM UP	7 THE BRAVE ONE
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN	9 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU

NOVALICHES

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3	3 NO RESERVATION
2 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU	4 SHOOT 'EM UP

PIONEER

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU	3 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 DECEMBER BOYS	4 WEDDING DAZE

STA. ROSA

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 THE HOST
3 SKINWALKERS
4 PLANET TERROR

LIPA

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 SHOOT 'EM UP
3 NANCY DREW
4 BRATZ

DASMARINAS

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
3 THE HOST
4 HABISPAY

IMUS

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
3 BRATZ
4 SHOOT 'EM UP

ANGELES

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 THE HOST
3 BRATZ
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

TARLAC

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 DON'T LOOK BACK
3 SHOOT 'EM UP

STARMILLS

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU	4 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 BRATZ	5 THE HOST
3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	6 RUSH HOUR 3

BACOLOD

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 THE BRAVE ONE
5 STOMP THE YARD
6 DISTURBIA

ILOILO

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
4 NANCY DREW
5 BRATZ
6 DAGYAMO

Stars benefit from acting 'out of the box'

DIRECTING BIG ITEMS CAN BE QUITE A trick. Some of them have become popular for playing mainly one type of "signature" characters, so it's difficult to persuade them to go out on a limb and do something new.

Stars are also used to doing things their own way, so they sometimes treat their bidding and showcase them to the best possible way.

Some directors accept this galling situation as "just the way things are," and direct a star to star film after another. This may not be very creative, but it does assure years of comfortable employment.

But for the directors who want to direct, and not act as big stars' choreutic "yes" man and yaya , they have to convince the luminaries they're directing that their careers will benefit from the new roles they're giving them.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Properly convinced, they are prepared to work harder than usual and take some risks to win success at (relatively...sort). hopefully, win some awards for their pains.

Not many stars are so ambitious, however. Most of them don't want to rock their profitable boat, hence the predictability of their performances, and their decisions to be directed by mere "yes" men.

They even vet real-to-as acting greats, but as many times since one of them wrongly opined: "So-bye na ang mga award, eh-ubo-common ang-ubo-sa." The performers may they say it leaves no doubt about what result they believe is better!

Exceptions to this shrubbery rule include Nora Aunor in "Bona," Vilma Santos in "Sister Stella L," Coco Martinez in "Tatsulong sa Sta Isa," Hilda Koronel in "Insiang," Rita Gomez in "Pagdating sa Langit," Marichu Maceda in "Crying Ladies," and Fernando Poe Jr in "Iguda." Save than all of these "out of the box" portrayals have been acclaimed, and added greatly to the stars' acting rachet.

Failed attempts

On the other hand, some stars also dared to do something different—but failed. For one, Comedy King Dolphy once tried to play it deep and serious in "Cyrano de Bergerac" but he then refused to accept him in the daringly different role—and he never attempted to reach for acting greatness again.

This is a great pity, because Dolphy and some other big stars have it in them to aspire for greatness—only, their fans won't let them. So much for "loving" fans wanting only the best for their movie idols!

What about today's stars—how many of them are prepared to push their talent to the limit and think out of the box? Star, not many. Thesis Angelica Magsalin in "Santa Santita," and Bobby Dalida in "La Vita Loca"—and that's about it.

Sad to say, younger stars have become even more cautious and timid than their seniors. Even the acclaimed Piolo Pascual does panty smash the same thing in his TV and movie outings, and Aga Muhlach's romantic comedy fare have trapped him in a comfortable groove that he seems to quickly disdain of, if he wants his hard-won acting reputation to remain intact.

The "commercial" constraints that helps explain why even the best screen actors come up with compromised performances from time.

In praise of the glorious Pinay

By Art Villasanta

IF HOLLYWOOD WANTS THE VILEST OF villains...

Right away they cast a Brit.

Viewers love English rude who inflict murder and pains...

While skewering viewers with their sharp wit.

In the Philippines, however, pure villainy seems reserved...

For the females of the species.

Gauze a Woman (gasp!) whose persona must ground...

With humorist "Kapuso" and "Kapamilya" indorsa.

Her name must sound Latin, replete with the vowels "a," "i" and "o"...

Such as, Lavinia, Valentina or Angelina.

She must be evil in the extreme, a super Cruella De Ville...

Who can believe "Mwahaha!" with baneful glee.

She must speak perfect English. Yes, yes, she must. The results are more condescending this way.

"I second that, crying hard copy and" seems to end it it's just "let bang him or piso mayong piso?"

Well, I've lost my degree but not my reason...

So, here's the point I want to make:

Pinays are paradoxically goddesses many more worship with and...

Loving, forgiving and fashionably smart...

It's famous on the beat in the hilariously named "Mega Manwatida" with the charms of a pencil vase.

Have a heart, 2 and 7, don't give us more evil ladies.

I'd rather encounter Ritchie and Angelica, instead.

But if you truly, dirdy need a really vicious baddie...

Hire an Alien.

It'll make money for you—until you're dead.